

POEMS BY FEARGHAL ÓG MAC AN BHAIRD

Pádraig Carthach Ó Macháin

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I hereby declare that this work
has been composed by me and that
the work is my own.

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Abstract

The poet Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird flourished during the second half of the sixteenth century and the first three decades of the seventeenth century. Sixty poems which can definitely be ascribed to him survive today. Of these, thirteen (over a quarter of his extant corpus in terms of the total number of quatrains) have remained unedited until now and the central part of this thesis consists of an edition of these poems. In broad terms these alternate in subject-matter between eulogies and elegies and range in date from 1580 to c. 1610. Each poem is provided with an introduction, translation, critical apparatus and textual notes.

Prefixed to this is a General Introduction in which is attempted an overview of the poet's life and work. The intention here has not been to discuss all of the poet's compositions in detail but rather to focus on aspects of his work which have received little attention to date while at the same time providing a context for the poems edited in the main section of the thesis. Notes on language and editorial principles are also included here.

Matters requiring special attention, arising from the General Introduction and from the edited texts, are dealt with in six appendices. These are followed by indexes and by bibliographical material.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

(i) Clann an Bhaird¹

From the early years of the seventeenth century onwards, when the order of poets, whose hereditary and professional function it was to compose poetry referred to today as Classical Early Modern Irish Verse, or 'bardic poetry', began to disintegrate, the family of Mac an Bhaird were remembered as being among the most prominent of that order. Their passing was lamented by the east-Ulster poet, Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh², and subsequent poets, of a more vernacular tradition, would refer to them nostalgically when contrasting their own era with times past.³ This prominent status is confirmed by the many anthologies or 'duanaireadha' of the period where the popularity of Clann an Bhaird is on a level with, and often superior to that of Clann Uiginn, Clann Dálaigh, Clann Eodhusa, Clann Chon Midhe, Clann Bhruaideadha and Clann Chraith.⁴ Of the many poets who flourished in

1 This is the form of the family name employed by Mac Fhir Bhisigh in his list of 'Aos Dána Éireann' compiled 1656-7; see *Celtica* i (1946-50) 92. Not to be confused with Clann a' Bhaird, a name used with reference to the Mac Ruairidhs of Trotternish, hereditary poets to Mac Donald of Sleat; see TGSi xxix (1914-19) 197.

2 *Di. D* 115.9.

3 *MD* 7 lines 9-12 (cf. lines 133-4); Ó Gallchóir, *Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta*, 42 line 142; *TD* i, p. xix.

4 Some relevant figures are as follows (B = Clann an Bhaird, U = Clann Uiginn, D = Clann Dálaigh, E = Clann Eodhusa, CM = Clann Chon Midhe, MB = Clann Bhruaideadha, C = Clann Chraith). Book of the O Conor Don (total: 370 poems): B 62, U 54, E 34, D 16, CM 13, MB 10, C 5; RIA MS 23 F 16 (total: 184): U 34, D 22, E 19, B 11, CM 9, MB 7, C 3. N Lib. Scot. MS Adv. 72.1.44 (total: 39): U 19, E 5, B 4, MB 4, C 4. RIA MS 23 L 17 (total: 120): D 22, U 16, E 16, B 7, MB 5, C 6, CM 2. Brussels Bibl. Royale MS 6131-3 (total: 39): B 20, E 4, U 3, CM 2. N. Lib. Ire. MS G 167 (total: 113): B 43, U 15, CM 11, E 6, C 1. The last two manuscripts are in the Uí Dhonnhaill interest. All figures could be revised (because of problematic ascriptions) but without affecting the general trend.

the mid/late sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries, these collections bear witness to the ascendancy of three: Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa and Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird.⁵ It is with the last of these that this thesis is concerned.

Ignoring the references in the genealogies to the seven sons of 'Lupait síur Pátric', to whom we find the name 'maccu/mac hui (in) Baird' applied in reference to their supposed Longobardic origins,⁶ the earliest extant reference to a member of the Mac an Bhaird family is to Máel Ísu, bishop of Clonfert (barony of Longford), county Galway, who died in 1173.⁷ His incumbency had lasted only a year following his succession to Petrus Ó Mórdha, a Cistercian who had been bishop from c. 1150 until his tragic death in December 1171.⁸ Clonfert was in the territory of Uí Mhaine, ruled over by the Uí Cheallaigh, and there is some evidence for patronage by them of the church.⁹ It is in this territory of Uí Mhaine that we trace the origins of the family of Mac an Bhaird.

Three locations can be cited in this connection. The only surviving genealogies of the Mac an Bhaird family are those concerning Mac an Bhaird Muine (an) Chasáin¹⁰ which trace their ancestry to

5 In Uí Dhomhnaill/ Tír Chonaill collections, Fearghal Óg competes with his kinsman Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig for popularity.

6 J. Mac Neill, 'Early Irish population-groups' in *PRIA* xxix C (1911) 75; *CGSH*, 29 (177), 157 (709.102), 172 (722.15); Carney, *The problem of St Patrick*, 46.

7 *AFM* iii, 10; *AU* ii, 176; *RC* xlii (1925) 290. In Appendix V I give a full list of annalistic entries relating to Clann an Bhaird.

8 Gwynn & Hadcock, *Medieval religious houses Ireland*, 64; see succession list *NHI* ix, 324.

9 Gwynn & Hadcock, *loc. cit.*

10 I have consulted the following manuscripts: UCD Add. Irish MS 14, p. 563 col. b; RIA MSS 23 D 17, p. 193 (= *Anal. Hib.* xviii (1951) 140); E iv 4, f. 20r; C iv 1, f. 212v; D i 3, f. 66v; 24 N 2, p. 298.

Sodhain Sálbhuidhe mac Fiachach Araidhi.¹¹ The precise location of Muine (an) Chasáin has not been ascertained, but it has been suggested that it was close to the two places next mentioned.¹² Of the twenty-seven entries in the various annals referring to Clann an Bhaird only five demonstrably concern the Uí Mhaine sept. Two of these mention 'Mac an Bhaird Chúile an Urtainn',¹³ which is taken to be Cooloorta,¹⁴ parish of Abbeyknockmoy, barony of Tiaquin. Also in the barony of Tiaquin, near Cooloorta, is Ballymacward, which, though not mentioned in the sources, must surely be associated with Clann an Bhaird. It is tempting to suggest, in fact, that Ballymacward is a later name for what was once Muine (an) Chasáin.

The entry in AFM for 1408 reads 'Mac an Bhaird Chúile an Urtainn, ollamh Ua Maine do écc' (see n. 13). This is the only reference to the Uí Mhaine Clann an Bhaird occupying an official position within the hierarchy of the native learned orders. Because of the subsequent history of the family, it is generally assumed that they were hereditary poets to the Uí Cheallaigh,¹⁵ even though none of their compositions has survived and though they remained quite powerful in the area throughout the sixteenth century.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the suggestion that Clann an Bhaird were professional poets in this early period,

11 Cf. O Flaherty, Ogygia: seu, rerum Hibernicarum chronologia, 327.

12 O Donovan, The tribes and customs of Hy-Many, 72.

13 AFM iv, 796 (1408); ALC ii, 476 (1586). The other entries, apart from that of 1173, are for 1356 (AFM) and 1566 (ALC) both of which mention an Uí Cheallaigh connection. See Appendix V.

14 E.g. Ó Raghallaigh, DER, 41 n.

15 Ibid., 45; P. MacCana, 'The rise of the later schools of filidheacht' in Eriu xxv (1974) 129.

16 Nicholls, Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland, 58; PRIA xxxvi C (1922) 105 (and cf. ibid. n. 3); Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 14), 99.4687, ibid. (15), 95.4672, 107.4711.

coupled with a possible connection with Clonfert (some thirty-four miles south-east of Tiaquin) is interesting in view of the thesis advanced by Professor Mac Cana that 'a goodly proportion of the post-Norman families of learned poets were descended from those hereditary officials who maintained possession of the old monastic termons after the monasteries themselves had been superseded'.¹⁷ In this respect also the name 'Mac an Bhaired' itself is worthy of notice. Though the matter still remains open to debate, it is generally accepted that, with the change in circumstances which accompanied the Norman invasion in 1169, the fili took over the functions of his subordinate, the bard, primarily with regard to the composition of praise-poetry.¹⁸ This change in circumstances also saw what Mac Cana terms the 'upward thrust of some of the inferior poets in certain surnames of hereditary poetic families in the post-Norman period', of which the name 'Mac an Bhaired' is but an example.¹⁹

If, in the early period, the bard was 'a minor figure in the Irish poetic hierarchy',²⁰ he does not appear to have experienced any noteworthy improvement in status during the Early Modern period. As Eleanor Knott expressed it, 'throughout the period covered in the court poetry of the classical style that has come down to us, roughly 1200-1600, the term bard whenever it appears denotes a subordinate functionary'.²¹ Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaired, towards

17 Op. cit., 133.

18 G. Murphy, 'Bards and filidh' in Éigse ii (1940) 200-07; J.E. Caerwyn Williams, The court poet in medieval Ireland, 26-33. E.C. Quiggin, in his 'Prolegomena to the study of the later Irish Bards', PBA v (1913) 92, took practically the opposite view, seeing the fili passing away and the bard advancing to a new status.

19 Op. cit., 138 n. 47.

20 Caerwyn Williams, op. cit., 29.

21 Knott and Murphy, Early Irish literature, 61.

the end of his career, refers to himself as having 'gan fiú an bhaird do bhuidhin'.²²

Their name, however, proved no impediment to the progress of Clann an Bhaird though it could sometimes leave them open to the jibes of rival practitioners such as those of the early seventeenth century Munster poet, Fear Feasa Ó 'n Cháinte, addressing Gofraidh Mac an Bhaird:

A bhaird gan an mbairdneacht féin,
a abhlóir bhig, a bheigéir,
mar shruth ngarg gidh teann a-taoi,
do gheall lem bard do-bhéarthaoi.²³

Tír Chonaill and Airghialla

The dispersal of certain learned families northwards and southwards from an area centred, broadly speaking, in the midlands, has been noted by Flower²⁴ and Mac Cana.²⁵ In the case of Clann an Bhaird this seems to have involved a partial²⁶ migration from Uí Mhaine to Tír Chonaill and Airghialla, present-day counties Donegal and Monaghan respectively. The basis of this conclusion is simply the fact that the earliest annalistic references to Clann an Bhaird are to those of the Uí Mhaine branch, but the migration to Tír Chonaill does find a parallel in the much better documented transfer of Clann Chléirigh from Uí Mhaine, first to Tír Amhalghaidh (co. Mayo) in the twelfth

²² Di. D 46.29b, see chapter (ix) below.

²³ Studies xl (1951) 359.68.

²⁴ The Irish tradition, 85.

²⁵ Loc. cit.

²⁶ Because, of course, a branch of the family still remained in Uí Mhaine, as noted above.

century, and from there to Tír Chonaill in the mid-fourteenth century, where members of that family became 'ollamhain re seanchas' to the Uí Dhomhnaill.²⁷

The earliest reference in the annals to Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill is to Gofraidh mac Eoghain who died in 1478 from a plague which had been transmitted from a ship docked in Assaroe.²⁸ However, the earliest surviving poem by a member of Clann an Bhaird is a moving elegy on the death of Domhnall, son and heir of the reigning Uí Dhomhnaill chief, Toirdhealbhach an Fhíona. Domhnall was slain at Assaroe in 1420 by members of the Uí Chonchobhair Chairbre²⁹ and the elegy, which begins 'Leasg an aghuidhsi ar Eas Ruaidh', is ascribed in all manuscripts to Eoghan Mac an Bhaird.³⁰ This Eoghan may be the father of Gofraidh who died in 1478 and, as he refers to Domhnall mac Toirdhealbhaigh as 'mo thighearna' (q. 20b), I feel reasonably confident in regarding him as the first recorded member of Clann an Bhaird in Tír Chonaill. We may therefore postulate a late fourteenth / early fifteenth century date for the arrival of the family in this area. This date is not very far removed from that of the arrival of Clann Chléirigh and the fact that the first recorded obit of a Mac an Bhaird Chúile an Urtainn is in 1408, coupled, as we shall see, with a more or less contemporary date for the migration to Airghialla, may betoken a general improvement in the fortunes of Clann an Bhaird from the late fourteenth century on.

27 Walsh, The Ó Cléirigh family of Tír Conaill, passim.

28 AFM iv, 1106; ALC ii, 176-8; AC, 580. The annals (see Appendix VI) mention the obits of Giolla Críst Mac an Bhaird (1449) and Tomás mac Uigestín Meic an Bhaird (1461) but it is not clear to what branch they belonged.

29 AFM iv, 842-4.

30 RIA MS 23 D 14, pp. 7-9; Franciscan MS A 32, f. 6 (incomplete); Brussels Bibl. Royale MSS 5057-9, ff. 26r - 27r, 6131-3, ff. 15v - 16v; N Lib. Ire. MSS G 167, pp. 78-81, G992, f. 10v. Edited from the RIA MS and Brussels 6131-3 by MacKenna in Studies xxxix (1950) 187-92.

At this point it is necessary to digress, briefly, as the notion that a member of Clann an Bhaird - Fearghal Óg by name - was composing verse in the mid-thirteenth century seems to have been generally accepted up to now.³¹ The reason for this is a poem on the battle of Druim Dearg in 1260, beginning 'Leachta carad i gcath Bhriain', which has been presented in two printed editions and ascribed to 'Fearghal Óg mac an Bhaird' in both.³² In both cases the editors appear to have used the same manuscript version, that of TCD MS 1291, ff. 109r-110v, copied in 1755 by Aodh Ó Dálaigh.

O Donovan is hardly to be blamed for allowing the ascription to go unquestioned but Fr MacKenna is not so easily excused, especially as he prefaced his edition with the extraordinary statement that 'the fact that this is to be found in only one MS. - and that a very corrupt one - is much to be regretted'. In fact, earlier and related copies occur in two late seventeenth century manuscripts, TCD 1381, pp. 60-61 and Br. Lib. MS Add. 40766, ff. 71v-73v.³³ In these two manuscripts the poem is unasccribed. Ó Dálaigh took his copy from TCD 1381³⁴ and as he is the only authority for the ascription to Mac an Bhaird, it must be dismissed as another instance of Ó Dálaigh's notorious practice of 'improving' on his sources.³⁵

The first mention of a Mac an Bhaird Oirghiall is in the year 1488 when Nuadha of that name died.³⁶ AC tells us that Nuadha was son of Seaán Cam.

31 E.g., see Professor Ó Concheanaim's remark in Éigse xv (1973-4) 235 n. 1.

32 Misc. Celt. Soc., 404-15; Studies xxxvi (1947) 175-80. A poem on the same subject by Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe is also extant, Mac C M XIII, and see ibid., 317.

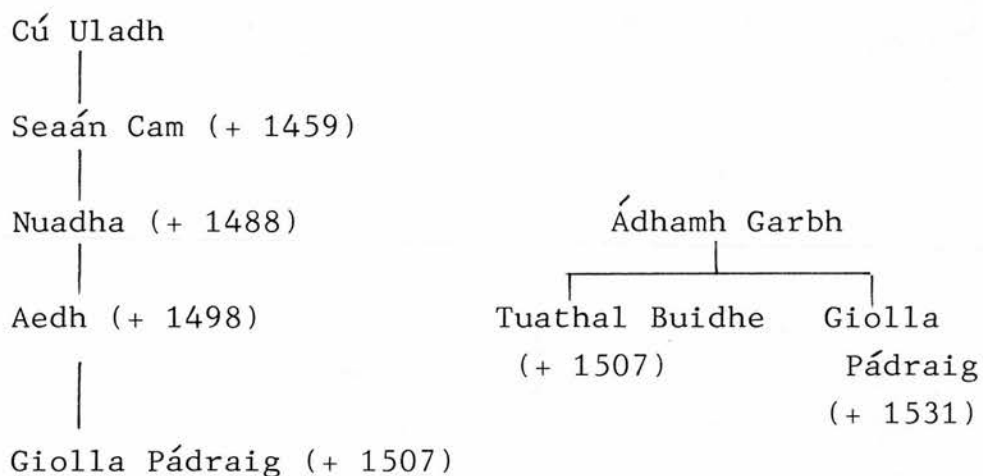
33 UCD Ferriter MS 12, pp. 53 ff. contains a copy transcribed from Misc. Celt. Soc.

34 Abbott and Gwynn, Catg, 236; cf. Simms, From kings to warlords, 24 n. 12.

35 Cf. Éigse v (1945-7) 186 n. (c).

36 AFM iv, 1164; AU iii, 332; ALC ii, 186; AC, 592.

This may be he who died in 1459 and whose patronymic is given as 'mac Con Uladh'.³⁷ If this identification be correct then, with the help of subsequent annalistic entries (see Appendix V), we can construct a tentative stemma for the early stages of this collateral branch, from about the late fourteenth, to the early sixteenth centuries.



There is much about this branch which remains unclear. Their designation 'of Airghialla' might suggest that they were attached to the Clann Mheic Mhathghamhna, yet little of the poetry has survived, save for that of Diarmaid Mac an Bhaird who flourished in the second half of the seventeenth century.³⁸ O Rahilly considered these to be 'perhaps the most important branch',³⁹ of Clann an Bhaird, a claim I would dispute, but there is no doubting the plentitude of their numbers in the barony of Cremorne,⁴⁰ in mid-county Monaghan where, in the seventeenth century, they appear to have been concentrated in the parish of

37 AFM iv, 1004.

38 RIA MS 24 P 4, pp. 263-72; Studies lxii (1973) 248; Celtica xix (1987) 61-74.

39 PRIA xxxvi C (1922) 104.

40 See Civil Survey x, 73.

Aghnamullen.⁴¹

It is with the Tír Chonaill branch, however, that our chief interest lies and here two general areas of settlement are discernable: in the barony of Tirhugh and in the barony of Boyleagh. The earliest place mentioned in the sources is Baile Meic an Bhaird which was burned by Raghnaill Mac Domhnaill in 1485 when he accompanied Ó Néill, Conn mac Éinrí, on a raid into Tír Chonaill.⁴² This is in a small townland in the parish of Kilbarron (barony of Tirhugh) on the northern side of the estuary of the river Erne overlooking Donegal Bay, roughly two miles west of Ballyshannon. I would regard this as the earlier of the two Donegal Clann an Bhaird settlements and it can hardly be coincidental that the two adjacent townlands immediately to the north, Creevy and Kilbarron, were the two areas granted to the Ó Cléirigh family, in the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries respectively, following their arrival in Tír Chonaill.⁴³ (We may also recall that the earliest extant Mac an Bhaird poem, mentioned above, was composed at Assaroe.) Kilbarron is given as the location of Fearghal Óg's kinsman, contemporary and fellow-poet 'Owen Roe McAward ... cronicler [*sic*]' in an inquisition dated 1603.⁴⁴ Another location in Tirhugh mentioned in association with a member of Clann an Bhaird is Dromore, where Eoghan Ruadh's father, Uilliam Óg, died in 1576.⁴⁵ Dromore is some five and a half miles

41 O Rahilly, loc. cit.; Clogher Record i (1953-6) 110-11; Shirley, *The history of the county of Monaghan*, 177, 349, 371; Pendar, *A census of Ireland c. 1659*, 160; Ó Dufaigh and Rainey, *Comhairle Mhic Clamha*, 36.

42 AU iii, 296. Traces of ringforts remain here to this day, *Arch. Surv.*, 159, 199.

43 Walsh, *The Ó Cléirigh family*, 32. The ruins of a church and castle are still to be seen in Kilbarron, *Arch. Surv.*, 276, 359-61.

44 Ó Raghallaigh, op. cit., 49-51.

45 AFM v, 1684. There are seven (O Donovan says ten) Dromores in co. Donegal - three in Raphoe, two in Boyleagh and Banagh, one in Kilmacrennan and one in Tirhugh - but O Donovan, *ibid.* n. f, is more than likely correct in identifying this Dromore with that of Tirhugh.

north-north east of Baile Meic an Bhaird, in the parish of Drumhome.

The second location of Clann an Bhaird Tíre Conaill is, as the name suggests, Leitir Mhic an Bhaird in the north of the barony of Boylagh. It is situated on the northern shore of the estuary where the Gweebarra River enters Gweebarra Bay. It was here in the townland of Cor(r), in the 1650s, that Gorry Ward/ Gory McAward is recorded as holding lands from two Scottish undertakers, Simple and Coningham, who, in turn, held the lands in lease from the See of Raphoe.⁴⁶ This is the only location remembered in local tradition which records that the lands were gifted to a Mac an Bhaird by an Ó Domhnaill as a reward for vanquishing a foreigner in a contest of wit,⁴⁷ though one source says that it was Ó Baoighill who gave the land.⁴⁸ I would suggest that this is a later settlement than that of Baile Meic an Bhaird and it may have occurred prior to the sixteenth century as, in 1510, Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill, Eoghan Ruadh, died in Inis Mic an Duirn (modern-day Rutland Island) in the parish of Templecrone, between Aran and The Rosses, some ten miles north-west of Leitir Mhic an Bhaird.⁴⁹

The reason that the Clann an Bhaird of Leitir Mhic an Bhaird are still remembered, and that those of Baile Meic an Bhaird are not is that while the former succeeded in retaining their lands - albeit as tenants (see above) - after the Plantation in Ulster, the latter did not. The area of Ballymacward formed part of the lands granted to Trinity College Dublin⁵⁰ though by 1659 it seems to have passed - on

46 Civil Survey iii, 82; Pendar, op. cit., 48.

47 E.g., IFC MSS 185, p. 336, 1032, p. 562, 1067, p. 54.

48 IFC MS 479, p. 38.

49 AFM v, 1304; AU iii, 494; AC, 614 (but location not given here).

50 Hill, An historical account of the plantation in Ulster, 445 n. 1; Civil Survey iii, 57, 62; for the general background see J. G. Simms, 'The Ulster plantation in county Donegal' in Donegal Annual x/1 (1971) 3-14.

lease, perhaps - to members of the Folliot family who held the neighbouring lands of Kilbarron.⁵¹ In two 'juramentos' in the archives of the Irish College of Salamanca, the brothers Hugo Wardeus (born c. 1593) and Ferdinandus Wardeus (born 1596) sons of Eoghan [Ruadh] Mac an Bhaird and Máire Ní Chléirigh, give their patriae as 'Tiriga' (Tirhugh) and 'Leitir', respectively.⁵² As an explanation of this Dr McGrath made the plausible suggestion that this particular family, faced with the threat of the English advance along the southern border of Tír Chonaill, had transferred to the relative safety of their kinsmen's patrimony in Leitir Mhic an Bhaird sometime between 1593 and 1596.⁵³ This, however, cannot be the latest date for the occupation of Baile Meic an Bhaird because, as we have seen, Eoghan Ruadh was back there in 1603.

Other locations

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the name Mac an Bhaird is found in parts of Ireland other than those treated of above. Brief mention may now be made of these. Four 'McEwards' are found in Ballymote, co. Sligo, in 1603.⁵⁴ They are all 'rymers' and this is the only reference to members of Clann an Bhaird, outside Tír Chonaill and Airghialla, who are specifically connected with the poetic profession. In 1591 two 'McEwards', Donell and Conor, were living in Balligurtin and Neile, co. Mayo.⁵⁵ Mac an Bhaids are

51 Pendar, op. cit., 43.

52 Arch. Hib. ii (1913) 29, 31.

53 C. McGrath, 'Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig Mhic an Bhaird' in Measgra, (108-16) 109.

54 O Rahilly, loc. cit., 105.

55 Cal. Fiantis Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 16), 195.5682.

also found in Roscommon at this time.⁵⁶

References to members of Clann an Bhaird in the Midlands occur from the mid-sixteenth century on. The locations here are counties Westmeath,⁵⁷ Kildare⁵⁸ and Offaly.⁵⁹ Persons of this name are also found in co. Clare⁶⁰ and south-west Tipperary.⁶¹ Today the family remains concentrated in counties Donegal and Galway.⁶²

56 Pendar, op. cit., 582, 586.

57 Ibid., 512-3, 523; Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep DK 17), 256.6550; White, Extents of Irish monastic possessions 1540-1541, 271.

58 Pendar, op. cit., 408; White, op. cit., 91; Cal. Fiants ... 11, 240.1598, 17, 81. 6188.

59 Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 13), 187. 4035.

60 Ainsworth, The Inchiquin manuscripts, 292.932, 446.1352.1.

61 Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 18), 61.6615.

62 Maclysaght, Irish families, 282. The townland name 'Ballymacward', parish of Derryaghny, barony of Upper Massereene, co. Antrim would suggest a Clann an Bhaird settlement in this area but I have found no evidence to support this. The element bard is found in placenames in both Ireland (e.g. Leacht na mBard, co. Monaghan; Gort an Bhaird, co. Tipperary) and Scotland (cf. TGSI xxix (1914-19) 197; Watson, History of the Celtic place-names of Scotland, 243).

(ii) Sliocht Eoghain Mhóir Mheic an Bhaird

Only two worthwhile studies have been made of the poets of Clann an Bhaird. Both were published in the 1940s and both have contributed considerably to our knowledge of this 'bardic' family. The first, a study of Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird by Dr McGrath, is important not only for information concerning that particular poet but also for his relation to the Mac an Bhaird family in general.¹ The second, a general survey of the family, assembled by Colm Ó Lochlainn from the papers of Fr Paul Walsh, is more superficial, and erroneous in parts, but with its conclusions, as presented in Genealogical Table V at the end of the book in which it appears, I am in general agreement, though some will have to be modified slightly.² As a comprehensive study of the poets of Clann an Bhaird would form the subject of a separate thesis, I will now confine myself to the immediate family of the poet with which this work is concerned, Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird.

A perusal of the genealogical table referred to above will show that five members of Clann an Bhaird Tíre Conaill bore the name 'Fearghal' during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³ To these we

1 Cit. (i) n. 53.

2 'The learned family of Mac an Bhaird' in Irish men of learning, 151-9.

3 Apart from our poet, two of these bore the name Fearghal Óg: one a Franciscan friar, 1596-1642 (see McGrath, art. cit., and chapter (ix) below), the other a poet who flourished in the second half of the seventeenth century (G 167, p. 402). (I ignore later persons such as Fergal McAward who was a tenant on the Murray of Broughton estate in south-west Donegal in 1730; see Donegal Annual xii (1977-80) 29.) Edward O Reilly lists three Fearghal Ógs (Irish writers, cxlii, clix, cxcvii). The first, he says, died 13 march 1583 but - though he was followed by Torna (LCAB, xxvi) who incorrectly cites AFM as his source, and by DNB - this date arose from confusing the poet with one of his patrons, Conn Ó Domhnaill, who did indeed die on the date mentioned. The second is said to have flourished c. 1600, which is correct, while the five poems ascribed to the Fearghal Óg who, he says, flourished c. 1655, were, in fact, all composed by Gofraidh Óg Mac an Bhaird.

can add one further Fearghal, son of Uilliam Óg (+ 1576) mac Cormaic (+ 1534) and father of a Somhairle who flourished circa 1649.⁴ Our knowledge of this Fearghal derives from an ascription of a poem in a seventeenth century manuscript and such ascriptions, together with the annals, are the principal sources for the construction of pedigrees for the family of Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill.

The name Fearghal mac Uilliam Óig occurs in two colophons in the later section of RIA MS 24 P 25, ff. 80v, 81r⁵ written sometime in the latter half of the sixteenth century.⁶ This possible Mac an Bhaird connection with the Mac Suibhne duanaire - seven of the twenty-one poems in which are attributed to poets of Clann an Bhaird - is important. Of the fifty-five poems which bear unquestionable ascriptions to our Fearghal Óg, one is ascribed simply 'Fearghal Mhac an Bhaird'⁷; forty-seven are headed 'Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird'; six are attributed to 'Fearghal Óg mac Fearghail Mheic an Bhaird'.⁸ Poem III in the present collection is found in only one manuscript, 24 P 25, f. 79v, and its ascription reads 'Fearghal occ mac Feargail meic Domhnaill Ruaidh Meic in Baird'. Because of the contemporaneity of this manuscript, its

4 Measgra, 111 n. 29.

5 RIA Catg., 1242. A 'Ferghal mac Uilliam' is referred to in a sixteenth century law manuscript from county Clare (Br. Mus. Catg. i, 138) and 'Fearghal (mac Uilliam)' occurs in two marginalia in the Leabhar Breac, RIA MS 23 P 16, pp. 60 i, 76 i, (RIA Catg., 3387).

6 See Poem III: Introduction.

7 O Hara XXIV; for a complete list of Fearghal Óg's sixty poems (fifty-five plus five unascribed) see Appendix VI.

8 Poem IV (MSS G 167; A v 1); POR XIX (MS Cambridge 3082); Éigse xv (1973-4) 31-50 (MSS G 167; A v 1); Di. D 107 (MS G 167); Di. D 20 (MS Book of O Conor Don); Di. D 46 (following Di. D 20 in O Conor Don and headed 'in fer cedna'). One commentator apparently believes that Fearghal Óg and Fearghal Óg mac Fearghail are two different poets: Ó Caithnia, Apalóga na bhfilí, 89.

Tír Chonaill provenance, and the Mac an Bhaird 'presence' in it, I am inclined to regard this ascription as authentic and reliable.

Of Fearghal Óg's grandfather, Domhnall Ruadh,⁹ we know nothing. Of his father, Fearghal, we are better informed. The 'Four Masters' record his death in 1550 as follows:¹⁰

Mac an Bhaird Thíre Conaill, Feargal mac
Domhnaill Ruaidh saoi fhírdhana, 7 oide
sccol, fear ro ba mór ainm, 7 oirdhearcus ar
fud Ereann ina aimsir, congmhalaigh
coitcheann tighe naoídheadh d'écc.

Only one composition of his appears to have survived: a devotional poem beginning 'Olc íocthar ar luagh leighis'.¹¹ This seems to have enjoyed a reputation both for its spiritual and metrical qualities: John Carswell chose to end his translation of the Book of Common Order, Foirm na n-urnuidheadh - published in Edinburgh, 1567 - by quoting two half-quatrains (qq. 28cd, 13cd) from it,¹² and one of these is cited in IGT ii.74 (line 1572).¹³

Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh is best known, however, as being one of three 'aos ealadhna Éireann' - the other two being 'Ó Cléirigh' and Conchubhar

9 A Domhnall Ruadh Mac an Bhaird made a 'comórtus' with the scribe of an early seventeenth century Donegal manuscript, but this Domhnall is, of course, too late for consideration; Franc. Catg., 38, (d), Irish men of learning, 175.

10 AFM v, 1518.

11 Di. D 48.

12 Thomson, Foirm na n-urnuidheadh, 113.

13 Ibid., 171 n. 3971-2. The citation is found only in the seventeenth century manuscript RIA 24 P 8; for a note on the date of the other manuscript, RIA C ii 3, see Celtica xviii (1986) 126 n. 7.

Ruadh Mac an Bhaird - who undertook to satirize Tadhg mac Cathail Óig Í Chonchubhair were he to renege on an agreement with Maghnas Ó Domhnaill concerning Sligo Castle, dated 23 June, 1539.¹⁴ Fearghal, at this time, was not yet 'Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill', head of his family. When Conchubhar Ruadh died, two years later, in December 1541, he was styled 'Mac an Bhaird'.¹⁵ Indeed, the evidence suggests that not until late in life did Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh gain that coveted position. In 1546, Maghnas Ó Domhnaill's brother, Domhnall, was slain in Inis Saimhéar, in the river Erne, by Eoghan Ó Gallchobhair and Ó Gallchobhair's wife. This murder was committed despite the protection of Cú Choigríche mac Diarmada meic Taidhg Chaim Uí Chléirigh and Mac an Bhaird, Gofraidh.¹⁶ From a series of five poems in G 167, pp. 119-30, 133-7, addressed by Cú Choigríche Ó Cléirigh to Maghnas (four) and to his son, An Calbhach, (one), we learn that Ó Cléirigh was banished to Thomond for failing in his duty to Ó Domhnaill.¹⁷ We are not told what happened to Mac an Bhaird¹⁸ but it is possible that he may have met a similar fate and that Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh was elevated to the position of 'Mac an Bhaird' as a consequence.

It appears that, apart from Fearghal Óg, Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh may have had at least

14 M. Carney, 'Agreement between Ó Domhnaill and Tadhg Ó Conchobhair concerning Sligo Castle (23 June, 1539)' in IHS iii (1942-3) 282-96. For commentary see Byrne, Irish kings and high-kings, 15; Breatnach, 'The chief's poet', PRIA lxxxiii C 3 (1983) 58-9.

15 AFM v, 1464-6; ALC ii, 332; AC, 720.

16 AFM v, 1494.

17 In the first of these poems 'Fada a ccairt ó Chloinn Dálaigh' Ó Cléirigh refers to himself (q. 34d) as Ó Domhnaill's 'ollamh'. It is possible, therefore that he is the 'Ó Cléirigh' mentioned in the Sligo Castle agreement of 1539.

18 Styled 'Gofraidh mac Eóghain' by G 167, p. 119. The same source gives 1540 as the date of the murder.

two other sons. In 1572, three members of the 'aos ealadhna' were hanged by the third Earl of Thomond, Conchobhar Ó Briain.¹⁹ These were Eoghan Ruadh mac Fearghail mheic Dhomhnaill Ruaidh Mheic an Bhaird, Muiris Ballach mac Con Coigríche meic Dhiarmada Uí Chléirigh and one 'mac Uí Mhóirín'. Eoghan Ruadh's kinsman, Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird (+ 1576) father of Fearghal mac Uilliam Óig, mentioned above, and of the later and more famous Eoghan Ruadh, composed a poem on this, urging Ó Domhnaill, Aodh mac Maghnasa, to avenge these executions.²⁰ Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn also referred to the matter in qq. 8-13 of a poem to Aodh mac Maghnasa beginning 'Molfaid Conallaigh clann Táil'.²¹

One of the differences between Uilliam Óg's treatment of the subject, and that of Tadhg Dall, is that the former is concerned with the general injustice which has been perpetrated and is all-embracing, though not mentioning any of the three by name, whereas the latter mentions only one individual: 'file maith ón taoibh thuaidh', 'File Í Dhomhnaill'. The question is: which of the three is intended by Tadhg Dall? It is clearly not 'mac Uí Mhóirín' who was, as the heading in G 167 says, 'dollamhnaibh shíol cCárrthaigh'.²² I should also be surprised were it Muiris Ballach, whose presence in Thomond, and that of his two brothers,²³ I would attribute to their father's exile in 1546. I

19 AFM v, 1656.

20 Poem begins 'Biaidh athroimn ar Inis Fáil'; edited by Brian Ó Cuív, 'The Earl of Thomond and the poets, A.D. 1572' in *Celtica* xii (1977) 125-45. Professor Ó Cuív (*ibid.*, 127) says that Uilliam Óg died in 1580 but the 'Four Masters' give it as 1576 (see chapter (i) n. 45 above). Conchubhar Ó Briain died in 1580/81 (AFM v, 1724).

21 TD 3.

22 See *Dán na mB.* M ii, 185-6.

23 See Ó Cuív, *art. cit.*, 126-7.

therefore believe that Eoghan Ruadh was 'File Í Dhomhnaill' but, although Tadhg Dall also refers to him as 'ollamh Uladh', I feel that this simply means 'a poet associated with Ó Domhnaill' rather than 'Ó Domhnaill's ollamh'.

Tadhg Dall further explains that Eoghan Ruadh - if it be he - went to Thomond to complete his training as a poet ('d'iarraidh ealadhan') and it was only when his learning was perfected ('ar mbeith ollamh n-ealadhan') that he met his grim fate. This is interesting because the only surviving poem by Eoghan Ruadh mac Fearghail is a short one of twenty quatrains beginning 'Cia riocht i rachuinⁿ go hAodh'.²⁴ It is addressed to Aodh mac Maghnasa and is clearly the poet's first poem to this subject and it is also clear that the poet has only just become fully qualified,²⁵ and this may therefore be his first and last poem. The first two quatrains are as follows:

Cia an riocht i rachuinⁿ go hAodh
do fheachus^s é i ngach^s entaobh
mithidh^s é do lomadh liom
mé go hollamh ni aithnionⁿ.

Do chaithfinⁿ claochlodh reachta^s
om rígh dfaghail mhaitheanta
sgel annamh^s é dom aithghin
me i nallan am neamhaithnidh.

In 24 P 25, f. 73r, there is a poem beginning 'Geall re hinbhe oighreacht Fhinn' ascribed to Domhnall mac Fearghail Mheic an Bhaird. The poem reveals nothing

24 G 167, pp. 177-8.

25 Cf. Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa's poem to Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir beginning 'Anois molfam Mág Uidhir', DMU XXIII.

about its author and is addressed to Toirdhealbhach Mac Suibhne, probably he who died in 1570 and who features in three other poems in the duanaire. It may be, therefore, that Domhnall mac Fearghail is son of Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh but the evidence is slight.²⁶

Further on (chapters (viii) and (ix)), I will be dealing with poems composed by Fearghal Óg towards the end of his career and addressed to Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire. In one of these, beginning 'Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh', the poet sets out the basis for the close relationship between his branch of Clann an Bhaird and Flaithrí's family.²⁷ When Flaithrí's grandfather, Muirgheas mac Páidín, was a young man and not yet fully qualified as an historian, a dispute arose between him and another 'adhbhar' concerning some question relating to poetry. Muirgheas journeyed north to Tír Chonaill where he enlisted the assistance of members of Fearghal Óg's 'aicme' who returned with him and gave judgment in his favour in the 'mórdháil', a result which, as the poet says, considerably enhanced Muirgheas's authority in the matter of learning. This created a lasting bond between the two families:

Sliocht Eoghain Mhóir Mheic an Bhaird,
sliocht Muirghis ón mBúill mbraonaird,
fa mhóid ghráidh shíordhuidhe ó shoin
tar dháimh fhíonMhuighe Fhionntain. (q. 21)

As Domhnall Ruadh was Fearghal Óg's grandfather, it is plausible to infer that Eoghan Mór was his

²⁶ Dr McGrath also made this suggestion, Dán na mB. M ii, 153.

²⁷ Di. D 90, Dán na mB. M 23, qq. 15-21. See chapter (viii).

great-grandfather, a conclusion made more likely by the fact that Muirgheas was a young man at the time this event took place. The probable date for this would have been around the beginning of the century as Muirgheas died, and was interred at Elphin, in 1543.²⁸

(The only other definite date we have for him is 1516 when he wrote the Book of Fenagh.²⁹) If he solicited help from Clann an Bhaird it is not unlikely that he would have appealed to the most prominent member therein, one whose authority would carry most weight in the 'mórdháil', namely Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill. At the beginning of the sixteenth century this was Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird who, as we have seen, died in 1510.³⁰ I believe we can equate this Eoghan Ruadh with the Eoghan Mór mentioned by Fearghal Óg.

I would not regard 'Mór' as an integral part of the personal name but rather as an epithet inserted in the poem metri gratia: it is necessary for alliteration and when editing the poem I would leave the initial in lower case. There is also the possibility that the poet wanted to be more precise than the name Eoghan Ruadh allowed. By the time the poem was composed two other Eoghans had been styled 'Ruadh': Fearghal Óg's brother, Eoghan Ruadh, and Fearghal Óg's contemporary Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig. It could be argued that to avoid any possible confusion the poet gave his ancestor the designation 'great' as if he were to say 'the Eoghan Mac an Bhaird', which emphasis was important if he wished to impress on Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire the great debt owed to Clann an Bhaird by Clann Mhaoil Chonaire.

28 AFM v, 1482; AC, 730; ALC ii, 338-40.

29 RIA Catg., 1284-8; Irish men of learning, 40-41, 49-73.

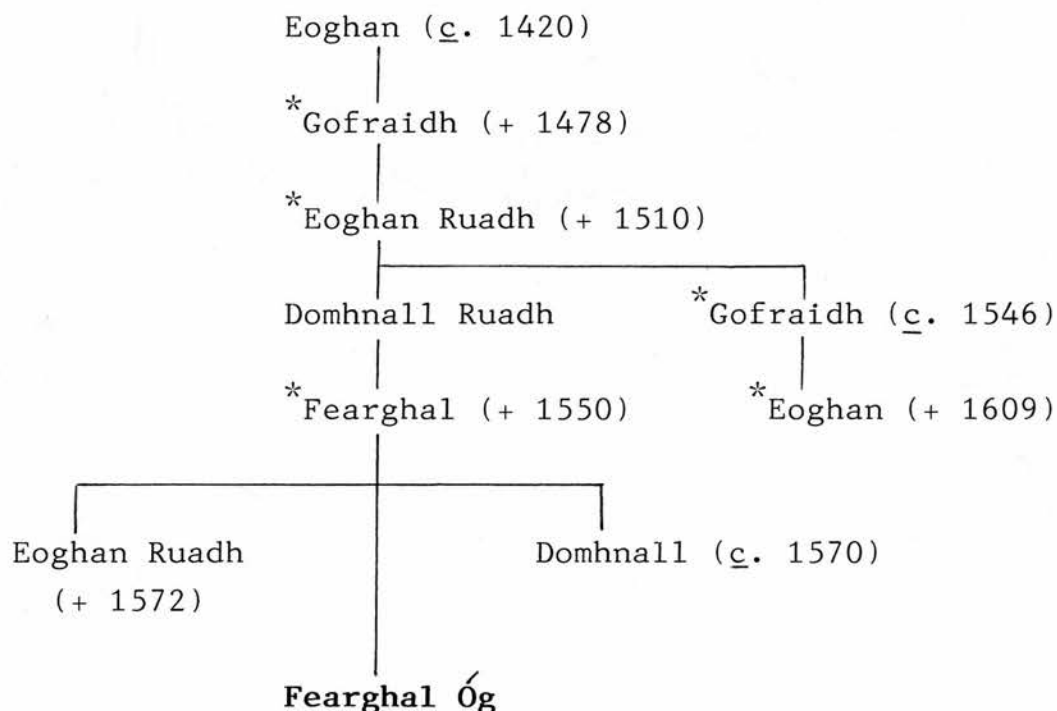
Muirgheas also made a copy of the Leabhar Gabhála, RIA D iv

3. For other work by him cf. NHI iii, 517.

30 See chapter (i) n. 49.

In 1609 the last recorded Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill died in old age. As if in recognition of the fact, the 'Four Masters' gave him a detailed patronymic: 'Eoghan mac Gofradha mic Eoghain mic Gofradha'.³¹ We have already met with Gofraidh mac Eoghain (n. 18) and it is quite possible that his father was Fearghal Óg's great-grandfather, Eoghan Ruadh. If that is the case then this Eoghan Ruadh's father may have been the Gofraidh mac Eoghain who died in 1478³² and whose father, as I suggested above, may have been the Eoghan Mac an Bhaird who composed the earliest surviving poem by a Mac an Bhaird in 1420.

Bearing in mind the tentative nature of my argument I will now summarise its conclusions in the following stemma:



31 AFM vi, 2368.

32 See chapter (i) n. 28.

It is worthwhile pointing out, at this stage, that five members - including his father - of the line to which Fearghal Óg belonged occupied the position of Mac an Bhaird Tíre Conaill (marked with an asterisk² above). This contrasts with two³³ from the line of his contemporary, Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig: Conchubhar Ruadh (+ 1541) mac Fearghail and Uilliam Óg (+ 1576) mac Cormaic mheic Fhearghail. If we can conclude that Fearghal Óg's branch were settled in Leitir Mhic an Bhaird from at least the early sixteenth century, and that that of Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig remained in their old patrimony of Tirhugh (see (i)), the above may suggest that the two lines were distinguished by territory as well as by genealogy.

33 Dr McGrath says of Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig that 'we know that he became the chief of his name' (Measgra, 112-3) but the reference he gives (ibid., n. 39) refers to Eoghan mac Gofradha.

(iii) Early Years

Dr McGrath has stated that Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird was born after 1553 and before 1562.¹ He does not cite any source for this information but, presuming that such a source exists, it must surely be erroneous as Fearghal Óg's father, Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh, as we have seen, died in 1550. Our poet must therefore have been born before or, at the latest, in that year.

The education of poets during the later middle ages is a subject which, for the most part, is obscure to us today and it is unlikely that it will ever become illuminated. Thus it is that we can only speculate as to what the circumstances of our poet's bardic training might have been. For instance, we know from his obit in the annals that Fearghal mac Domhnaill Ruaidh was an 'oide scoll', and one supposes that this might have been the most likely place for the poet to begin his studies. One might imagine him gaining some extra training in classics from the friars in Donegal Abbey where, we are told, such instruction was available.²

On the other hand the author of the Dissertation which forms the preface to the Memoirs of the Right Honourable The Marquis of Clanricarde informs us that of the students studying at 'the poetical Seminary or School ... seldom any come but from remote parts, to be at a distance from Relations and other Acquaintances that might interrupt his Study'.³ We might therefore be inclined to look outside Tír Chonaill for the location of Fearghal Óg's

1 Dán na mB. M ii, 153.

2 Dowling, The hedge schools of Ireland, 15; O'Donnell (ed.), Franciscan Donegal, 9.

3 IBP, pp. 5-6.

training. That aspiring poets travelled outside of their home regions to study is well known. Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn refers to Ulster poets journeying to an Ó hUiginn school in Kilcloony (par. Tuam, bar. Dunmore), co. Galway, to study.⁴ Professor Ó Cuív has written: 'we can imagine that the reputation of the teacher would weigh with the student in his choice of a school. It must have been some such consideration that brought the sixteenth-century poet Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa down to Munster to begin the ascent of the ladder of learning'.⁵ Eochaidh's struggle between his desire to finish his studies and his desire to see his patron Aodh Mág Uidhir is recorded in his well-known poem 'A-tám i gcás eidir dhá chomhairle'.⁶ It is clear, however, that Eochaidh also received some training in Ulster, for he says as much in 'Mór an t-ainm ollamh flatha'.⁷

We have already seen that Fearghal Óg's brother, Eoghan Ruadh, was studying to be a poet in Thomond when he met his violent death. It is possible that Fearghal Óg, also, spent some time studying here as we know that he had connections with Clann Bhruaideadha.

In his Anatomicum Examen Inchiridii Apologetici of 1671,⁸ Fr Antonius Bruodinus, a grand-nephew of Tadhg mac Dáire Meic Bhruaideadha,⁹ makes the following statement:

4 TD 12.6; cf. TD ii, 243.

5 Celtica x (1973) 139.

6 Di. D 70; ISP, 72-7. McGrath, op. cit., 110 n. 1 suggests, that the author is not Eochaidh but rather Giolla Brighde Ó hEodhusa.

7 See paraphrase in Carney, The Irish bardic poet, 23-5.

8 I am grateful to Fr Bartholomew Egan, Dún Mhuire, for allowing me to consult a hand-written copy of this work made by Fr Brendan Jennings in Munich in 1912.

9 Eigse iv (1943-4) 48.

Ferallus Wardaeus in Comitatu Tyrconellensi
nominatissimus quondam vir, principisque O
Donel Archipoeta et Historicus, Mariam
Bruodinam, Darij filiam in uxorem habuit.¹⁰

Maria's sister, Margarita, married one Daniel Clery -
'jam nominati Principis O Donel Consiliarius et
Chronologus' - and of the two sisters Bruodinus says:

ab his duabus foeminis plurimi praeclari
viri, saeculares, et Ecclesiastici in
Ultonia origⁱⁿem traxerunt.¹¹

This Ferallus Wardaeus would appear to be our Fearghal Óg - he was after all a contemporary of Maria's brother, Tadhg - but the fact that Bruodinus is not considered to be a very reliable authority¹² and that we know nothing of Fearghal Óg's distinguished children,¹³ must raise some questions as to the accuracy of this account. Nevertheless, taken in conjunction with what we have noted regarding Fearghal Óg's brother, Eoghan Ruadh, such evidence is tantalizing and impressive. I will return to the subject of Fearghal Óg's sojourns in Munster further on.

In the Introduction to Poem XII I mention that two poems by Fearghal Óg addressed to members of Síol Néill are extant. The earlier of these may well be the earliest datable composition by our poet. It

10 Ibid., 58 (v); *Anatomicum*, 134-5.

11 Loc. cit.

12 *Eigse* iv, 48-50.

13 In 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir' (which I discuss at length further on) Fearghal Óg refers to his one time having a 'clann oirdhearc' and to having been deprived of them subsequently: 'bheith gan chloinn gan chonách' (*Di. D* 46.36). One suspects, however, that this phrase may be formulaic; cf. *T Bg.*, lines 9710-12.

is addressed to Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill¹⁴ and begins 'Maith do suidhigheadh Síol Néill'.¹⁵ Its theme is that Ó Néill is maintaining the pattern of supremacy established by his ancestors (qq. 1-17, 23-5) - a supremacy prophesied by St Patrick (qq. 18-22) - in that everyone submits to him (qq. 42-3) just as Corc was forced to submit to Niall Naoighiallach (qq. 44-52). The excellence of Toirdhealbhach's rule is visible in two ways: in the fertility of the land (qq. 26-32) and in the peace and sense of law and order which prevails (qq. 33-41). Ó Néill is therefore set to reign supreme (q. 25) and continue the ascendancy of his race (qq. 53-8).

This poem is reminiscent of the type of poems which the band of poets brought to Toirdhealbhach Luineach at Christmastime 1577¹⁶ but it is possible that we are, in fact, to date it to almost ten years earlier, to 1567, when Toirdhealbhach became chief of his family.¹⁷ This is suggested by the use of the future tense in qq. 25 (lines 97-100) and 58 (lines 229-32) which might be interpreted as betokening the beginning of a new era. Possible confirmation of this occurs in q. 38a (line 149) where we find reference to 'An reacht nuasa Í Néill anos'. If this be the case, then the poem shows Fearghal Óg to have been a trained poet by 1567.

The earliest datable manuscript containing work by Fearghal Óg is Nat. Lib. Scotland MS Adv. 72.2.14. This dates from c. 1582¹⁸ and it contains four poems

14 Not a member of Clann Aodha Buidhe, pace Professor Ó Concheanainn, Eigse xv (1973-4) 236 n. 10.

15 LCAB IX.

16 TD 8.16-18.

17 Ó Donnchadha, LCAB, p. xxvi, suggested that the poem belonged to c. 1581 but offered no evidence in support of this.

Hayes-McCoy, Scots Merc., 109, dates it to 1567.

18 See Introduction to Poems I, IA.

by our poet. Two of these - very short pieces - I have edited in the present collection as Poems I and IA. They are both religious compositions on the theme of repentance. Because of this, I suggest, in the Introduction to these poems, that they may be connected with a series of poems¹⁹ found in the same manuscript which deal with St Patrick's Purgatory on Station Island, in Loch Derg, co. Donegal.

One of these is a poem ascribed to Fearghal Óg beginning 'Slán uaim ag oiléan Pádraig'.²⁰ Station Island continues to be a place of pilgrimage in modern times, but during the medieval period, when it enjoyed renown throughout Europe, its principal attraction was a cave - 'uaimh Pádraig',²¹ - where penitents were said to be tormented with visions from the other-world.²² This uaimh is the subject of Tadhg Dall's 'Teach leagha leaba Phádraig',²³ and in a poem beginning 'Truagh mo thuras ar Loch Derg',²⁴ (ascribed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh) the author laments his inability to weep tears of repentance even though he visited the cave.²⁵

19 Leslie, Saint Patrick's Purgatory, 167-80.

20 Ibid., 173-4. Inferior copies of this poem are to be found in RIA MSS 24 L 28, pp. 345-6 (17th century), 24 L 35, flyleaf (19th century) and in TCD MS 1346, pp. 85-6 (18th century).

21 TD 45.1a.

22 John Ryan maintained that 'the popularity of the Purgatory in medieval Europe lay in its appeal to superstitious curiosity', Studies xxi (1932) 453. The most recent work on the subject is Picard's translation of the twelfth century Tractatus de Purgatorio sancti Patricii in Picard and de Pontfarcy, St Patrick's Purgatory. For the influence of the traditions on medieval iconography cf. Mac Tréinfhir, 'The Todi fresco and St Patrick's Purgatory Lough Derg' in Clogher Record (1986) 141-58.

23 TD 46.

24 Leslie, op. cit., 166-7.

25 As noted in the Introduction to Poem I (n. 7) the 'gift of tears' is also the theme of the Latin poem and Irish translation (the latter neither as inspired nor as metrically competent as the editor claims) said to have been composed by

Fearghal Óg's poem, as the first line suggests, is really not a devotional poem (perhaps Poems I and IA reflect the devotional component of his visit to Loch Derg?) but rather a short poem of farewell and is stylistically comparable to two similar compositions by our poet: those beginning 'Slán agaibh a fhiora Mumhan'²⁶ and 'Beannacht siar uaim go h-Éirinn'.²⁷ As in those poems, the poet lists the things to which he bids farewell or sends greetings. Here, these consist of the various stages of the turas on the island - the beds, yew tree, cave, and Linn Phádraig²⁸ - as well as the Augustinian canons²⁹ (q. 2) to whom the poet sends a salutation.

72.2.14, then, is important as it shows Fearghal Óg as a composer of religious verse at an early date in his career. This observation is reinforced by the presence in the manuscript of another religious poem ascribed to Fearghal Óg, that beginning 'Ná déana díomas a dhuine'.³⁰ Here the poet addresses an Everyman figure, urging him to adopt an eschatological view of life and to avoid the sin of pride. As this is a poem which is also significant for another reason, I will return to it later in this General Introduction (chapter (x)).

Domnchadh Ó Cobhthaigh on Loch Derg in 1584 (Celtica xvi (1984) 171-4, cf. Celtica xviii (1986) 150). Fearghal Óg's visit, and that of the other poets in 72.2.14, clearly predates this.

26 IBP 7.

27 Ibid., 5.

28 All of these, except the yew tree, are well documented in two near-contemporary accounts: that of Míchéal Ó Cléirigh (Leslie, *op. cit.*, 180-81) and that of the Papal Nuncio, Francesco Chiericati (*ibid.*, 64-5; cf. Gwynn, The medieval province of Armagh, 49-52).

29 See Gwynn and Hadcock, Medieval religious houses Ireland, 193.

30 Di. D 43.

An enigmatic aspect of the early years of our poet is the question of his relationship with Conn Ó Ruairc.³¹ Out of Fearghal Óg's entire corpus, seventeen poems (just under a third) contain dedicatory quatrains to Conn in all of which it is to be understood that he is no longer alive. From these quatrains we can see that the poet enjoyed special patronage from Conn³² and gave expression to their association in terms of the topos of the poet-lover³³: 'samhail damh beangán gan bláth/ mo leandán ón tan teasdá'.³⁴ It is therefore a matter of some surprise that no poems addressed by Fearghal Óg to Conn survive.

The following information concerning Conn's immediate ancestry is to be gleaned from these complimentary quatrains. He was 'mac ríogh fhóid Aolmhuighe'³⁵, 'mac Í Ruairc'.³⁶ His father's name was Brian³⁷ and his mother's was Gráinne.³⁸ This fixes him as a son of Brian Ballach mac Eoghain Í Ruairc who died in 1562.³⁹ This Brian had two wives: 'inghean Uí Dhomhnaill, a chédbhean, 7 inghean Meg Uidheir an darna bean'.⁴⁰ Gráinne was therefore his first wife, daughter of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill, as we can infer from her obit, in the year 1551: 'Grainne inghean Maghnusa mic Aodha mic Aodha Ruaidh, bean Uí Ruairc, Brian mac Eocchain do ecc, an 29 April'.⁴¹

31 Attention has been drawn to this by Professor Ó Concheanainn in a rather disappointing article in Éigse xv (1973-4) 235-51.

32 E.g., 'fear ó bhfuighinn ól is umhla' (Poem XII); 'Ní dhiúltfadh Conn Maisdean me/ um choin ná um bhrat na um bhuaisbré' (Di. D 118.29); 'Dá mairthea, a Chuinn mo chridhe/ do-gheabhainn uaid impidhe' (Celtica xv (1983) 94.26).

33 See Poem III. 7a n.

34 Éigse xv (1973-4) 48.68.

35 Poem V. 77b.

36 Poem XII. 60a, O Hara XXIV. 25a, IBP 6.21a.

37 Poem VIII. 49b.

38 O Hara VIII. 55a.

39 AFM v, 1590.

40 Celtica i (1946-50) 248.

41 AFM v, 1520.

To my knowledge, Brian Ballach had at least three sons named Conn. The earliest of these would appear to be he who in 1540 was in active opposition to his father⁴² and whom his father had killed later the same year in consequence of this opposition.⁴³ The second was the 'Conacius O'Roerke' who was pardoned in 1570⁴⁴ and whose death is recorded by the 'Four Masters' under the year 1577: 'Conn mac Briain mic Eocchain, fear rob ócc naoisi, 7 ro ba foirfe i neineach, 7 i neangnamh do écc'.⁴⁵ The third was Conn Bráthar - 'incliti Principis Bernardi y Ruairck filius'⁴⁶ - who, with Patrick O Healy, Bishop of Mayo, was hanged in Kilmallock in 1579.⁴⁷

Of these three I think the person most likely to have been the Conn mentioned by Fearghal Óg would have been he who died at a young age in 1577.⁴⁸ I can offer no certain solution as to why no poem survives addressed to him by Fearghal Óg except that, as in the case of Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa and Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir,⁴⁹ Fearghal Óg may have been waiting to finish his training as a poet before addressing Conn in verse, by which time Conn had died. But this solution is suspect in that we have seen that Fearghal Óg's earliest datable poem may predate Conn's death by ten years. One might, alternatively, surmise that Conn may have been fostered in Tír Chonaill - or Fearghal Óg in Bréifne - and that their friendship arose under these circumstances.⁵⁰ But such speculation is idle

42 AC, 714.

43 ALC ii, 328; AFM v, 1464.

44 Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 11), 228-9.1515.

45 AFM v, 1690.

46 Anal. Hib. vi (1934) 174.8.

47 Ibid., 25.3, 75, 112.11; ALC ii, 426-8.

48 This is accepted by all commentators (e.g. Di. D, p. 477, Éigse xv (1973-4) 235 n. 6) though the matter has not been discussed in any depth.

49 See DMU XXIII.

50 On the question of fosterage see Séamas Ó hInnse, Fosterage in early and medieval Ireland, 150-80.

in the absence of any supporting proof.

Gráinne, daughter of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill, was also mother of Brian na Múrtha Ó Ruairc, as we learn from Tadhg Dall.⁵¹ This means that he and Conn were full-brothers. Brian was executed in London in November 1591⁵² and the following year Fearghal Óg composed a poem to mark the inauguration of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill.⁵³ The death of Ó Ruairc the previous autumn had sufficient effect on the poet to merit his inclusion in the complimentary quatrain to Conn:

Brian agus Conn ag crádh ar n-uailleine
dá nuaibhile fa fáil le fonn mbraonDuibhe;
minic ba tréan ortha gach éinfhile
na féinnidhe toghtha nachar éar aonduine. (q. 23).

This suggests that Fearghal Óg may have enjoyed some form of patronage from Brian.

Now two poems to a Brian Ó Ruairc by Fearghal Óg survive in unique copies (excluding later transcripts) in the Book of the O Conor Don. The first is a neat praise-poem of three quatrains beginning 'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán'.⁵⁴ The first quatrain praises his cruas and buga⁵⁵, the second likens Ó Ruairc to Murchadh mac Briain and to Niall Caille and the third claims that he is the one prophesied by Bearchán⁵⁶ who will possess Tara and be

51 TD 16.52a.

52 E.g., AFM vi, 1904-6.

53 'Ní fada ón Fhódla a táth a dtuaidheamhain', Di. D 109.

54 ISP, 23. Professor Ó Cuív (Eigse ix (1958-61) 254) has drawn attention to a single quatrain which in metre and in its opening line - 'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha Ghaidheal' - is similar to this poem. In conversation he has also suggested parallels between qq. 2a and 3b of our poem and qq. 14a and 11c respectively of 'Aisling ad-chomnarc ó chianaibh' by Giolla Brighde Albanach (Eigse vii (1953-4) 82).

55 Cf. Poem V. 14b n. For an emendation to the final line of this quatrain see Eigse xv (1973-4) 16.

56 Cf. Poem V. 53c n.

king of all Ireland. The use of the future tense here, comparable to that noted in 'Maith do suidhigheadh Síol Néill' above, led Miss Knott to entitle this piece an inaugural ode. If so, it is not what is generally understood by that term, as Miss Knott herself admitted.⁵⁷

I would interpret this poem as a short complimentary piece to Ó Ruairc. Perhaps - as praise of his munificence is among the first things encountered in the poem - in thanks for some gift received. It is noteworthy that the only other composition by Fearghal Óg which is as short as this is one to Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir thanking him for sending the poet a present.⁵⁸

We have seen that Fearghal Óg referred to Brian na Múrtha in one of the additional quatrains in his poem on the inauguration of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill in 1592. I can see no reason for not suggesting Brian as the subject of 'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán'. Professor Ó Concheanainn thinks it more likely to have been his son, Brian Óg, half-brother of Tadhg of Poem XI below (q.v.), who is involved.⁵⁹ This suggestion is based on the evidence of the second of the two poems referred to above. This is a poem of reconciliation beginning 'Gabh, a Bhriain, liom fám lochtaibh'.⁶⁰

Here the poet apologises to Brian Ó Ruairc for some unspecified offence of which Ó Ruairc has complained to the poet's friends (q. 8). Fearghal Óg, it seems, was unaware of having done any wrong and, in the uirsgéal concerning Fionn and Mac Lughach (qq. 11-19), intimates to his patron that his transgression

⁵⁷ ISP, 82.

⁵⁸ DMU III.

⁵⁹ Éigse xv (1973-4) 238 n. 18; see also next note p. 95 n. 21a.

⁶⁰ T. Ó Concheanainn, 'Dán réitigh ó Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird' in Celtica xv (1983) 88-95.

may be attributed to youthful exuberance which can be curbed through the counsel of an elder.

There is no indication in the poem, by way of patronymic or otherwise, as to which Brian Ó Ruairc is addressed. If my interpretation of the significance of the apologue is correct, one would be inclined to identify him with Brian na Múrtha. The poem proper closes with a complimentary quatrain to his brother Conn. Then follows an additional quatrain lamenting the death of Aodh Mág Aonghusa (see below and Poem V, Introduction). This suggests that the poem was composed after 1595/6 and therefore was addressed to Brian Óg. However, Poem IV in the present collection teaches us to treat such additional quatrains with caution when employing them for dating purposes, as q. 79 there concerns the dead Mág Aonghusa whereas the poem itself dates from 1583.

(iv) Patronage

As already indicated, the other personage to share with Conn Ó Ruairc the honour of being addressed in complimentary quatrains by Fearghal Óg is Aodh Mág Aonghusa,¹ lord of Íbh Eathach, who died in January 1596. At least three poems concerning him were composed by Fearghal Óg, with the possibility of one more, and, of these, two were addressed to him when he was alive (Poems V and VI in the present collection).² While it is clear that the poet remembered Mág Aonghusa as his principal patron during the period prior to 1596, the fact that so few compositions addressed to him by Fearghal Óg survive suggests that our poet did not confine his activities exclusively to Íbh Eathach during that period, and this observation is borne out by an examination of other poems in his corpus.

In the context of the flight of the Earls in 1607, I will have occasion to mention two poems by Fearghal Óg concerning Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir who brought the ship from Nantes to Rathmullan. His father, another Cú Chonnacht, had been inaugurated as Mág Uidhir, in succession to his brother Seaán, in 1566³ and was to remain as chief of his country until his death in 1589.⁴ In their notice of his death the 'Four Masters' praise him for his learning and his patronage of poets and, as if in confirmation of this, a duanaire⁵ compiled in his honour survives today.

1 Our poet also includes dedicatory quatrains to St Peter – more than the combined total of those addressed to Conn and Aodh – and I mention this feature further on.

2 Mág Aonghusa, and Fearghal Óg's poems to him, are discussed in full in Poem V, Introduction.

3 AFM v, 1608.

4 Ibid. vi, 1874; ALC ii, 492.

5 Cf. Ó Cuív, The Irish bardic duanaire, 27.

The first four folios of this vellum manuscript contain five poems addressed to him by Fearghal Óg.⁶

Their position in the manuscript might suggest they are of an early date but in fact there is nothing in these poems to give any indication as to the time of their composition. The first and second poems contain dedicatory quatrains⁷ to Cú Chonnacht's second wife,⁸ Mairghréag, these being later additions by the main scribe, Cú Mhumhan Ó Cléirigh. This is of no assistance, however, as his first wife, Nuala, does not appear at all in this duanaire, and all we know of Mairghréag is that she was a daughter of Seaán Ó Néill.⁹ All we can say for certain, then, is that these poems cannot be earlier than 1566 and cannot be later than 1589.

The years 1566-7 must have been a busy time for the poets with the inauguration of Ó Ruairc, Mág Uidhir, Ó Domhnaill¹⁰ and Ó Néill and it may be that some of Fearghal Óg's poems to Cú Chonnacht date from that early period. That our poet did not occupy anything akin to a 'permanent' position at Enniskillen is clear from his poem of apology to Mág Uidhir for pouring a cup of wine into the latter's face. This begins 'Uaibhreach mise ar Mhág Uidhir' (DMU V) and it is unfortunate that it is now defective, due to a chasm in the manuscript, as it has the appearance of a

6 DMU I-V.

7 There are no complimentary quatrains to either Conn Ó Ruairc or Aodh Mág Aonghusa in these poems.

8 Lambeth Palace MS 635, f. 30r gives his wives as the daughter of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill (Nuala) and the daughter of Seaán Ó Néill (Mairghréag), in that order, which accords with Greene's observations in DMU, pp. x-xi, save that he suggests a third wife, Bé Bhinn, mentioned in DMU IX. 34-6 and X. 32-4. Could it be that this is a pet name for Mairghréag?

9 Mairghréag is also mentioned in DMU XIX, XX and XXIII.

10 Aodh mac Maghnasa became Ó Domhnaill in 1566 on the death of his brother An Calbhach, AFM v, 1606; see Poem IV, Introduction.

fine composition, with the poet offering Cú Chonnacht a deoch aghmholta (q. 11b) to compensate for the one with which he previously insulted him. In the course of this apology he remarks:

File cuarta dob edh inn
móide as clú a n-uaras d'uirrim;
nír me, far-íor, a ollamh
giodh gníomh hé nár íocomar. (q. 8)

Yet, though he may have been simply a file cuarta to Máig Uidhir, he was obviously popular enough with him to be the recipient of unsolicited gifts, as is recorded in his very short poem of thanks beginning 'Buidhioch mé do Mhág Uidhir' (DMU III).

The three other poems are panegyrics: that beginning 'Cia re bhfuil Éiri ac anmhuin' (DMU II) proposes Cú Chonnacht as a suitable mate for Éire who has been a widow since the death of Donnchadh mac Briain (qq. 1-7). This is a conventional theme in this type of poetry but there are two points about this poem which are noteworthy. One is the uirsgéal (qq. 25-34) which consists of 'a neat little abridgment of the famous Tecosca Cormaic'.¹¹ One may wonder if in fact this does not entitle us to consider this composition as a possible inauguration ode as the inclusion of the topos of the speculum principum would be entirely appropriate in a poem concerning such an occasion.¹² The second point of interest is a stylistic feature which is found elsewhere in Fearghal Óg's poetry. That is, the repetition of an opening

11 ISP, 92.

12 A comparable example is the closing quatrains of the inauguration ode to Art mac Aodha Mhéig Aonghusa beginning 'Trí uaithne um inis Ghaidheal'; e.g., cf. RIA MS 23 M 18, p. 351.19-352.16.

word or phrase over a number of quatrains. In this case it is braithim (qq. 18-21) and bíodh a fhios (qq. 22-4). This is a rhetorical device which Fearghal Óg was to use to maximum effect in one of his last poems, 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir', discussed later in this General Introduction (chapter (x)).¹³

The poems beginning 'Leath re Fódla fuil Uidhir' (DMU I) and 'Brath lendáin ac Leic Lughaidh' (DMU IV) attract our attention for a different reason. The first, which opens Cú Chonnacht's duanaire, is unique in Fearghal Óg's work in that it is composed in full rannaigheacht bheag, that is, with perfect internal rime in both half-quatrains. 'Brath lendáin' differs from this only by virtue of the metre in the first leathrann not being so strict: fifteen quatrains have full rime, fourteen have one full rime and one or more comhardadh brisde, eleven have only comhardadh brisde.

Both poems also compliment each other thematically. Most of Fearghal Óg's poems usually contain a central theme which is subjected to a treatment which, depending on their length, may loosely observe the following pattern: exposition, development(1), apologue(1), development(2), apologue(2) etc., resolution/ conclusion. In these two poems, however, there is no central theme. They consist, rather, of a set of four recurring sentiments loosely intertwined. These may be outlined as follows: (a) Mág Uidhir is the supreme ruler/ the one proclaimed by the Lia (I. 1-3, 9, 12, 17-18, 22, etc.; IV. 1-4 et passim); (b) it would be foolish to oppose him (I. 7-8, 13, 16, 24, 32; IV. 7, 9, 16, 34, etc.); (c) his rule is just and he desists from using force (I. 5, 30c, 36b, 40b; IV. 5, 19, 24) and this is

13 Compare also Poem V. 67-76 and POR XIX. 27-38.

reflected in the fertility of the land (I. 33-5; IV. 31-3); (d) he is generous to poets (I. 4b, 6, 20, 25-6, 31b, 38, 40 (request for reward); IV. 6, 8, 10, 21, 23, 30). This fourth element suggests that the poet was producing a disinterested set-piece purely for reward, such, one imagines, as might befit one with the status of a file cuarta. It may be that 'Leath re Fódla' met with some success and that 'Brath lendaín' was produced in response to a request for more of the same.

In Poem III.4 of the present collection Fearghal Óg alludes indirectly to having been in Munster. One assumes that he must have ventured south on many occasions when on his circuit. In later life he was to be banished there by Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill and in my treatment of this below I mention that the poem beginning 'Slán agaibh a fíora Mumhan',¹⁴ may belong to that period but, indeed, the happy sentiments it expresses could apply to any occasion as could his salutation to the same territory in quatrain ten of 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn'.¹⁵

I have already referred to our poet's possibly early connections with Thomond¹⁶ and from Poem II we know that he was in Carbery c. 1580. We know of yet another visit to Munster from one of five poems addressed by Fearghal Óg to Cormac Ó hEadhra preserved in the latter's duanaire, a vellum manuscript the main part of which was compiled some time towards the end of the 1590s. The poem in question begins 'As fiacha ar neach an ní gheallas',¹⁷ and in it Fearghal Óg addresses his teachdaire

14 IBP 7.

15 Ibid., 5, discussed in the next chapter.

16 Cf. also Poem VIII. 3 n.

17 O Hara X.

instructing him to take a laoidh chumainn - promised for some time - from him in Munster to Ó hEadhra (q. 1d) in co. Sligo. The notion of a laoidh chumainn alerts us to the possibility of our poet having enjoyed a special relationship with Ó hEadhra and this is confirmed by the language employed in qq. 12-13, e.g.:

Cóir do ghrádhoigheas géag Mháighe;
minic fhuaras san trian tuaidh
a ghrádh, a uille ar cúl comhóil,
a rún uile, a onóir, uaidh. (q. 11)

This is reminiscent of Fearghal Óg's earlier relationship with Conn Ó Ruairc and, indeed, this poem closes with a dedicatory quatrain to Conn and preceding this are two such quatrains to Conn's sister's daughter, Máire, wife of Cormac Ó hEadhra.

Cormac appears to have become Ó hEadhra c. 1581¹⁸ so that 'As fiacha ar neach' must be later than that date. What may well be Fearghal Óg's earliest poem to Cormac may concern his accession to the chieftaincy. The theme of this poem, which begins 'Táinig san chluiche ag Cormac'¹⁹, is that Cormac has had to struggle against all the odds before ultimately winning through to his deserved supremacy. This is comparable to Poem VIII in the present collection, the theme of which is similar save that there the Goill are specified as the objects of Mac Diarmada's martial attention, and which I suggest may date to c. 1596 following the installation of that chief by Ó Domhnaill. Another point of comparison between these two poems is the use of the motif of the hardships

18 Ibid., p. xxiv.

19 Ibid. VIII.

endured by the warrior while seeking to obtain control over his territory. This occupies qq. 27-36 of 'Táinig san chluiche' and it also features, in different contexts, in two later poems by Fearghal Óg to Cormac, those beginning 'Sona sin a chlanda Cuind' and 'Fáth cumhadh ag crích Luighne'.²⁰ The use of the hardship motif in these poems I have mentioned in Poem XII. 10 n. in the present collection.

'Sona sin a chlanda Cuind' contains complimentary quatrains to Cormac's second wife, Caitilín, daughter of Toirdhealbhach Ó Raghallaigh, (qq. 42-5). This suggests that Fearghal Óg's association with Ó hEadhra may have lasted, on and off, over quite a period of time. In my discussion of his poems composed in Scotland, in the next chapter, I propose that Fearghal Óg's relationship with Aodh Mág Aonghusa may, just possibly, date from before 1581. If this is true, then one may well imagine that some conflict of interests may have arisen between the poet's attachment to Mág Aonghusa and the patronage received by him from Cormac Ó hEadhra.

It is of interest, therefore, that one of the four surviving dedicatory quatrains addressed to Aodh Mág Aonghusa while the latter was still alive²¹ occurs in a poem addressed to Cormac Ó hEadhra. This is that beginning 'Grádh mo chroidheisi Cormac',²² a short poem in which the poet expresses his love for Ó hEadhra. There are two complimentary quatrains to Caitilín (qq. 10-11) and these are followed by the quatrain to Mág Aonghusa:

Ceand einigh innsi Logha
Mág Aonghusa mh'fhíorchara,

20 Ibid. IX and XXIV.

21 See Poem V, Introduction n. 40.

22 O Hara XI.

líonta a-nú dá thoil a-tám
a-tú ar n-am ghoin dá ghéarghrádh. (q. 12)

In my Introduction to Poem VI in the present collection, I make the suggestion that that composition may be a poem of appeasement to Mág Aonghusa, with the poet, as it were, re-introducing himself to his old patron after an extended absence in 'críoch na gConn'.²³ The poet's situation is described in terms of a conceit wherein he depicts himself as his own hostage who must be ransomed by his patron. This conceit calls forth imagery associated with the imprisonment of hostages of which one element is that of wounding - 'Mé 'gam ghuin im gheimhil féin' (q. 6a) - which ties in nicely with the idea of one being wounded by love: 'cosmhoil mar tá ar dtoil ar-aon/ má tá Aodh dá ghoin dom ghrádh'. In the context of the theme of that poem, and the possible circumstances which occasioned it, the verbal echo of these lines which occurs in the closing quatrain of 'Grádh mo chroidheisi Cormuc' may not be entirely fortuitous.

Of the poems composed by Fearghal Óg in the 1580s/ early 1590s, the only one which can be dated more or less precisely is his longest poem, Poem IV in the present collection, an elegy on Conn mac An Chalbhaigh Í Dhomhnaill who died in 1583. In the discussion of 'Grádh mo chroidheisi Cormuc' above, I mentioned that it was one of four poems containing a quatrain dedicated to Aodh Mág Aonghusa during his lifetime. Another such composition is one to the two sons of Ó Fearghail of Annaly, co. Longford, which its editor

23 Cf. Poem VI.11a n.

has dated to 'roimh 1592'.²⁴ This piece begins 'Ar sliocht trír a-táid Gaoidhil' and its significance lies in the fact that it may have provided the poet with an opportunity of testing an idea which he intended to use later in a poem to Mág Aonghusa. That is, to consciously borrow lines and references from a fifteenth century poem which extolled the martial prowess of Clann Rudhraige, as part of an attempt to produce a comprehensive and definitive metrical essay on that race which would form the framework of a eulogy of their leading sixteenth century representative, Aodh Mág Aonghusa. 'Ar sliocht trír', then, would have given Fearghal Óg the chance to try out one part of that scheme and I have discussed this in the Introduction to the poem to Mág Aonghusa, Poem V in this edition.

Not far from Ó hEadhra's territory of Leyny is Ardnaree, now part of Ballina town, the residence in the 1580s of Uilliam mac Seaáin Búrc. One imagines that it was during one of his spells with Cormac Ó hEadhra that Fearghal Óg made the acquaintance of Uilliam, but that friendship appears to have been terminated by the patron's refusal to reward the poet for his efforts and Fearghal Óg recorded his dissatisfaction with this in the only surviving crosántacht by him, the poem which I have edited here as Poem VII. Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn addressed four poems to Cormac Ó hEadhra²⁵ and two to Uilliam Búrc²⁶ and it is difficult to imagine that the paths of the older poet and the younger poet did not cross on many occasions in North Connacht.

Two further poems of relatively

24 T. Ó Concheanaim, 'Dán molta ó Fhearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird' in Celtica xvi (1984) 73-85.

25 O Hara II-V; TD 29-32.

26 TD 22, 23; see Poem VII, Introduction.

indeterminate date may also belong to the 1580s/ early 1590s. One, beginning 'Cia r  r fh  iltigh Inis F  il', is addressed to Pilib mac Aodha Conallaigh    Raghallaigh;²⁷ the other, beginning 'M  r c  ir ch  ich ar chr  ch Laighion', concerns Fiachaidh mac Aodha    Bhroin.²⁸ Pilib was a 'mac r  ogh'²⁹ who was installed as head of his people by    N  ill in 1596 but who was accidentally slain by    N  ill's followers the same year.³⁰ Fearghal   g's poem to him predicts that he will dispel   ire's sadness - a sadness which was only borrowed (q. 14d) - and, in order to support this claim, a catalogue of hardships is introduced to illustrate Pilib's experience of warfare thus making use of that motif in much the same way as it occurs in the poem to    hEadhra, 'Sona sin a chlanda Cuind'.³¹ The quantity of material which survives addressed to this Pilib, the bulk of which exists in two duanaireadha,³² shows that he was an immensely popular patron of the poets.

The same can also be said of Fiachaidh    Broin to whom twenty-eight poems are addressed in the    Broin duanaire. Mac Airt would appear to be mistaken in stating³³ that Fiachaidh succeeded his father, Aodh mac Sea  in, who died in 1579.³⁴ Three years later the annalists record the death of    Broin, D  nlang mac   amainn and state that as their country had been overrun by the English, no successor was inaugurated.³⁵ Nevertheless, Fiachaidh seems to have

27 POR XIX.

28 L Branach 23.

29 Cf. the opening lines of POR IV and XIV: 'Cionnus do mholfuim mac r  ogh', 'N   ar aois meadhaighthe  r mac r  ogh'; for the term see Poem VII, Introduction.

30 AFM vi, 1996.

31 See above and Poem XII. 10 n.

32 See    Cu  v, The Irish bardic duanaire, 33.

33 L Branach, p. x.

34 AFM v, 1712.

35 Ibid., 1746-8.

had control of Glenmalur until his murder in 1597.³⁶ It is on this aspect of Fiachaidh's career, his ability to repel invaders, that Fearghal Óg dwells. Fiachaidh, who is the prophesied one (qq. 20-31), repays every harm done to him (qq. 32-5) and, by virtue of the geall daonachta which he has received from the poets, will ensure that Éire will rise again from her otharlót (qq. 36-7). As in the poem to Pilib Ó Raghallaigh, the catalogue of hardships - albeit reduced in length - occurs here again (qq. 20-22) one interesting point of which is the reference to wet feet (q. 22c) which I have only, to date, elsewhere observed in Fearghal Óg's poem to Cormac Ó hEadhra, 'Fáth cumhadh ag crích Luighne'.³⁷

In the poem beginning 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn' Fearghal Óg gives us to understand that, at the time of the composition of that poem, he had not yet visited Leinster,³⁸ and a similar inference might be drawn from a quatrain in his poem to Mac Suibhne Fánad.³⁹ Thus, if my proposed date of c. 1581 for 'Beannacht siar uaim' is correct (see next chapter) this would mean that 'Mór cóir cháich' is later. More than that, regarding the date, one cannot say. With regard to the doubt as to authorship⁴⁰ it is clear that those manuscripts deriving from Brian Mac Giolla Phádraig's transcript of 1622⁴¹ all ascribe the poem to Fearghal Óg, that is: Harvard University Library MS Ir. 6, ff. 21r-22v, TCD MSS 1288, f. 97r, 1346, p. 136. The ascription to Niall Ó Ruanadha, to whom five other poems are ascribed in the copies of Mac Giolla

36 Ibid. v, 2016-8.

37 O Hara XXIV. 18c.

38 'Sluagh Laighean nach beag bronnadh/ siad fós gion go bhfacamar' IBP 5.12.

39 Poem III. 5b n.

40 L Branach, p. 366.

41 See ibid., pp. xiv-xvii.

Phádraig's transcript,⁴² derives from the eighteenth century scribe Muiris Ó Gormáin who, probably on the strength of these other poems, attributed 'Mór cóir cháich' to Niall in what is now Br. Lib. Eg. 176, f. 3r, which ascription was subsequently copied by Finghin Ó Scannail and Edward O Reilly into Br. Lib. Eg. 177 and RIA 23 Q 1 respectively.

In chapter (vi), below, I discuss poems composed by Fearghal Óg during the years 1601-5. One of these was an elegy on Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill who died in September 1602. Another, beginning 'Turnamh dóchais díoth muirne' was addressed to his brother Rudhraighe c. 1603-4. In this poem, as I point out in that chapter, Fearghal Óg gives us to understand that he enjoyed some privileged position in Tír Chonaill during Aodh Ruadh's time, referring to himself as an ollamh flatha.

Only two other poems addressed by Fearghal Óg to Aodh Ruadh survive today. For the preservation of what seems to be the earlier of the two we are indebted to the nineteenth century Ó Longáin scribes. This begins 'Ní fada ón Fhódla a táth a dtuaidheamhain',⁴³ and it survives complete only in copies made by members of that scribal family.⁴⁴ The poem is in droighneach metre, one of only two in our poet's extant corpus composed in that metre.⁴⁵ This

42 See Poem VI, Introduction.

43 Di. D 109.

44 I have counted nine copies: RIA MSS 23 O 25, 23 O 27, 23 O 28, 24 C 11, 23 N 3, NLI MS G 439, Maynooth MS M 13, Coláiste Eoin (Waterford) MS 5, Coláiste Cholmáin (Fermoy) MS 7. Three quatrains survive in the seventeenth century manuscript RIA MS 24 P 27, p. 126i which were copied by Edward O Reilly into 23 N 26. It is of interest to note that 24 P 27 was once in the possession of Peadar mac Mhichíl Uí Longáin: see RIA Catg., 27.

45 The other begins 'Deacair foghnámh do thoil dá thighearna': see chapter (x) *infra*.

metre is in its full dán díreach realization here and it is therefore likely that the faulty rimes in qq. 4ab, 9bc and 13ab are to be attributed to manuscript corruption.⁴⁶

This is essentially a poem of prophecy. Help is at hand for Éire as Aodh Ruadh will unite the country, all the Gaoidhil gathering around him (qq. 1-3). As a means to this end, he will make a hosting throughout Ireland after which the Lia Fáil will proclaim him king; having taken the hostages of the five provinces, all will submit to him (qq. 4-7b). In support of this supremacy he will receive the acclamation of Nature: the hot weather, the produce of the trees⁴⁷ and of the earth, the full moon, the rivers will all testify to his rightful leadership (qq. 7c-10). In a similar way Nature will give witness to his right to rule the provinces of Éire (qq. 11-13).

Aodh Ruadh, then, will occupy Teamhair and the country will be at peace, free from danger: there will be no plundering, no need to have doors on 'cuirmthighbh',⁴⁸ his maoir will uphold his rule throughout the land, the hosts of the five provinces will gather in Teamhair for wine-drinking, Aodh Ruadh,

46 Other irregularities in rime are amenable to automatic emendation: for gcroibhiodhain read gcraoibhiodhain (3a), for buachail read buachail (9d), for challdartaigh read cholldartaigh (12d), for a-nois read a-nocht (25a).

47 This is the meaning of 'cuirfidhir na habhla theas fa thromchubhaidh' (q. 7d) - the apple trees in the south (a way of indicating the extent of Aodh Ruadh's rule) will be sorrowful because of the weight of their fruit - which Mac Cionnaith did not understand: 'beidh an Mhumha ag caoineadh an ríogh ba dhual dí, .i. sliocht Briain(?)' Di. D., p. 477.

48 That is, doors are used only to keep out raiders and there will therefore be no need for them during Aodh Ruadh's peaceful reign (q. 19c). Professor Ó Concheanainn has pointed out two further instances of this motif, from the work of Fearghal Óg, in Celtica xvi (1984) 86.

who will deliver true judgments, will patronise the poets who acclaim him as the only possible ruler of the country (qq. 14-22).

It is possible to date this poem reasonably accurately. The poet twice refers to Aodh Ruadh as Ó Domhnaill (qq. 10d, 15f). This provides us with a terminus a quo of 1592, the date of Aodh Ruadh's inauguration in Kilmacrennan.⁴⁹ Another detail, to which I have already made reference in chapter (iii) above, is the mention of Brian na Múrtha in the dedicatory quatrain to his brother Conn in this poem (q. 23). Brian was executed in November 1591 and the fact that his death is lamented here suggests that the subject was still fresh in the poet's mind. For this reason I would be inclined to view the poem as dating to 1592 and as being composed to celebrate Aodh Ruadh's inauguration as leader of his people. We should also note that in the penultimate quatrain (q. 24), dedicated to Aodh Mág Aonghusa, we are to understand that that patron is still living.

'Ní fada ón Fhódla', then, may very well have been an occasional poem, prepared in honour of a special event. It describes a prospective ideal and is in contrast to the first half of a poem by Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa to Aodh Ruadh, composed about the same time, which begins 'Díol fuatha flaitheas Éireann'⁵⁰ and in which that poet warns him of the hazards and responsibilities of his kingship.⁵¹ This, of course, is not to suggest that Fearghal Óg was in some way divorced from the realities of life in late sixteenth

49 See the account in BAR i, 36-40.

50 Copies consulted: RIA MS 23 L 17, ff. 83r-85r; NLI MS G 167, pp. 224-8.

51 E.g., 'Obair bhaoghlach dá bharr tiogh/ cosg foghla na gcóig gcóigíodh/ fuim ghlanaoibhne fán gnáth olc/ ní fáth romhaoidhmhe a ríoghocht' (q. 16).

century Ireland. One of these realities was the necessity to secure patronage at a time when the range of potential patrons was beginning to become increasingly narrower due to the acceleration of the English conquest with the consequent increase in competition from fellow poets.

The second of the two poems to Aodh Ruadh, referred to above, reflects this reality. It begins 'Ionnmhas ollaimh onóir ríogh'⁵² and constitutes an ultimatum from Fearghal Óg that he be awarded the position of ollamh to Ó Domhnaill. He expresses this in terms of the honour (onóir) which a king may bestow on a poet, which is greater than any material wealth and without which the poet is a person of no consequence though he equal or excell the legendary Mac Coise or Mag Liag in poetic ability (qq. 1-6). Whatever the reason for not granting him his due honour - perhaps Ó Domhnaill had found some fault with the poet? (q. 7) - even were Aodh Ruadh to attain to the high-kingship⁵³ Fearghal Óg would still be entitled to the position (q. 8) and he reminds the chieftain that the honour-price of an ollamh is equivalent to that of a king or a bishop (qq. 9-10).⁵⁴

It is clear to Fearghal Óg that Aodh Ruadh

⁵² Studies xli (1952) 99-104.

⁵³ Contrast this hypothesis with the positive assertion of 'Ní fada ón Fhódla a táth a dtuaidheamhain'.

⁵⁴ Cf. qq. 4-5 of Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa's poem to Aodh mac Con Connacht Mhéig Uidhir (r. 1589-1601):

Rí easbog agus ollamh,
ó lucht eoluis uaramar,
gabhtha uaimse mh'iúl orra,
triúr is uaisle armmorna.

Ionann dóibh, ní dáil leatroim,
díol éarca agus eineacloim,
ionann dóibh comairce is cion,
ó thromaicne mhóir Mhíleadh.

(O Conor Don, f. 214r; 23 F 16, p. 91; 23 L 17, f. 114v).
Cf. CIH 1618.11-13 (Ancient laws of Irleand v, 112).

does not think him worthy of the position, if he did the poet would not be disgruntled (qq. 11-12).⁵⁵ It is a cause of shame to the poet that others are being advanced before him⁵⁶ but it will be a cause of even greater shame to Ó Domhnaill because, if he is not given what he demands, the poet will not remain in Tír Chonaill but will travel throughout Ireland seeking a better onóir and, by implication, spreading reports of Ó Domhnaill's inhospitality (qq. 13-15).⁵⁷

The interpretation of quatrain 16 is problematic:

Gibé ar tús dá dtugthar neimh
go hóg is hé 'n-a naoidhin
ní mharand 's gan hí d'fhagháil;
do-ní a anam d'ionggabháil.

This could be taken to mean that the poet has been accustomed to rejection from an early age and that he is now so used to it that he could not live without it. My interpretation of it would be that the poet is ironically using neimh as a metaphor for the onóir without which he cannot survive.⁵⁸

Yet Fearghal Óg still believes that he and Aodh Ruadh can come to an arrangement such as was effected between the ridire who sold his superlative

55 This interpretation differs from that of Professor Breatnach who sees in q. 11 an admission by Fearghal Óg that he is unworthy; 'The chief's poet', 44.

56 Cf. qq. 7-9 of 'Turnamh dóchais díoth muirne' discussed in chapter (vi).

57 My interpretation of q. 14 is at variance with that of Professor Breatnach (loc. cit., 45) who takes it to mean that 'Fearghal Óg speaks of the embarrassment he feels to go among other patrons in the knowledge that he is not O'Donnell's ollamh'.

58 A similar argument for the continuation of wonted patronage is made by Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird in 'Diomdhach mé don mhacdhacht ríogh': see chapter (vi) n. 32.

horse to the king of France in return for the king granting him special favour for a year (qq. 17-24). The king is Aodh Ruadh, the ridire Fearghal Óg and the horse his poetic art which he will exchange for permanent, unconcealed affection; thus the equivalence between the uirsgéal and the case of the poet is not total as what he seeks is not an arrangement for one year (qq. 25-7).

To seal his argument Fearghal Óg turns to his ancestral right to claim: his family have always been employed to enhance the reputation of Síol gConaill in Tír Chonaill above all others (q. 28). In recognition of this his ancestors were given land free from exactions (q. 29). He calls on the poets of Ireland to give witness that he deserves to receive 'dlighiodh mh'aithreach' from Síol gConaill (q. 30). This dlighiodh could be taken to mean either the ownership of the land in question⁵⁹ or it could still refer to the onóir which he has been demanding throughout and in support of which the precedent of his ancestors is now being cited.

In any case, to say that Fearghal Óg demands this right is not to express it too strongly. We have seen that he threatened to leave Tír Chonaill if he did not receive his onóir ríogh and in the penultimate quatrain this threat is renewed:

Slán ag Aodh muna fhaghar
ceart mh'aicme a hucht mh'ealadhan;
a fagháil muna fiú mé
ní bhiú d'anáir na héigse.⁶⁰ (q. 31)

⁵⁹ Professor Breatnach takes it to be so (loc. cit., 49-50, 62).

⁶⁰ I do not understand Professor Breatnach's problem with this quatrain (loc. cit., 70 n. 167). The first line is a syllable short only if MSS muna is not emended to the correct classical form. Similarly, there is 'corruption' in line c only if MSS lenition of fagháil is allowed to stand, which is not correct as the pronoun a refers to anáir (a feminine noun) in line d.



It may be that this poem is to be construed as part of a general competition for the position of ollamh to Aodh Ruadh. We know of at least one other poet, Maol Muire Mac an Bhaird, who was strongly petitioning Aodh for his dúthchas at this time.⁶¹ That poet, however, belonged to the same branch of the family as Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig⁶² whose patrimony, if my analysis in chapters (i) and (ii) be correct, was situated in an area of Tír Chonaill different to that of Fearghal Óg.

One feels that for our poet to approach this subject in the manner in which he does, he must have been arguing from a position of some strength. That is to say, he does not plead for or request his onóir: he demands it, and what he threatens if his demand is not conceded is not satire - at least not explicitly - but rather that he will remove himself from Tír Chonaill. The evidence of 'Turnamh dóchuis díoth muirne', and, to a lesser extent, that of Bruodinus (see chapter (iii)), suggests that on this occasion Fearghal Óg may have obtained that which he sought.⁶³

61 P. Breatnach, 'A poem of protest' in Celtica xvii (1985) 91-100.

62 See Walsh's genealogy in Irish men of learning.

63 Cf. also q. 3 of 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir', Di. D 46.

(v) Scotland

An entry in the Scottish Treasury Accounts for May 1581 reads:

Item to fergall og Irische poet be his maiesties
precept as the samin with his acquittance
producit upoun compt at lenth beris jc lib.¹

Although our poet was not the only one of his time to bear the name Fearghal Óg,² when all the evidence is taken into account there can be little doubt that this refers to Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird.

1581 was a relatively good time for a Catholic to be in Edinburgh. James VI, now almost fifteen years old, had effectively ended his minority and was beginning to assert his independence³ and authority much to the disquiet of the Reformed Church. In September 1579, on an occasion marked by great pomp and ceremony, James left Stirling Castle and 'addresst himselff to his capital toune of Edinburgh to mak the first entrie to his kingdom thair, as the first parliament toun of his cuntrie'.⁴ It appears that the Earl of Morton, who had succeeded the Earl of Mar as regent in 1572, considered that he still exercised sufficient control over James and so did not stand in his way when the king acceded³ to the persuasion of his cousin Esmé Stewart, Lord d'Aubigny, recently arrived from France, helped by another new arrival, James Stewart of Ochiltree, and decided to make his

1 SRO MS E 21/61-2, f. 131r. This reference was discovered by Dr John Durkan of Glasgow University and communicated to me by Dr John Bannerman.

2 E.g. Fearghal Óg Ó hUigim (see Poem I, Introduction); Fearghal Óg Mac Eochadha (*L. Branach* 34, 46).

3 To be briefly interrupted from August 1582 to June 1583 by the Ruthven Raiders.

4 The historie and life of King James the Sext, 178.

'first progress and promene' among his subjects. Innocuous as this may have seemed, within less than two years Morton was in prison, accused of Darnley's murder by James Stewart, while the latter was created Earl of Arran and Esmé Stewart was made Earl, afterwards Duke, of Lennox.⁵ In the same month that Fearghal Óg received his £100 from the king, Morton was brought from Dumbarton to the Tolbooth in Edinburgh⁶ where he was executed on 2 June.⁷ It is not inconceivable that Fearghal Óg was a witness to this event.

This change in influence over James produced a marked estrangement between king and kirk⁸ and, to set the scene, it is worth quoting James Melville on this point:

At that tyme it was a pitie to sie sa weill a brought upe prince till his bairnhead was past, to be sa miserablie corrupted in the entress of his springall age bathe with sinistrus and fals information of all proceedings in his minoritie, and with evill and maist dangerus grundes and principalles in his government of Kirk and Comon Weill. Then was he maid to think warst of the best men that ever servit in this Kirk and Countrey; to think the haill maner of Reformation of religion to haiff bein done be a priuie faction, turbulentlie and treasonablie; to suspect the noble men and haill minestrie that stude for the cause of religioun and his

5 Dickinson, *Scotland from the earliest times to 1603*, 355.

6 *The diary of Mr James Melville 1556-1601*, 83.

7 *A chronicle of the kings of Scotland*, 135; Hewitt, *Scotland under Morton 1572-1580*, 188-211; Elizabeth is reported to have called James 'That false Scotch urchin' for his part in Morton's downfall: Willson, *King James VI and I*, 39.

8 Lynch, *Edinburgh and the Reformation*, 157; for the state of affairs immediately preceding Morton's overthrow see Hewitt, *op. cit.*, 103-19.

crown against his mothers faction; yea, to take course against them, and put at thame as his unfriends.⁹

This alienation did not go unnoticed by Catholic interests. In 1583, in a letter intended for his old schoolmaster in Rome, Alexander Seton, Earl of Dunfermline, wrote that 'The duke of Lennox ... had been so successful with the king that James's mind was alienated from the ministers'.¹⁰ In September 1581 the Jesuit, Fr Robert Parsons, wrote from London that

it is very desirable to take him [sc. James] in hand while he still professes obedience to his mother, to whom he is just now very devoted; and the heretic party have recently given him great offence.¹¹

He added, further on, and with some significance in the context of Fearghal Óg's visit in that year, that 'It is at present easy to obtain access to the King, and he is not at all unimpressionable, but this may not continue always ...'.¹²

What brought Fearghal Óg to Edinburgh is unknown. It is not impossible that he digressed from a circuit of the Highlands in order to profit from the favourable atmosphere at court. On the other hand, it is tempting to associate his visit with the contacts which Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill had established with the young king at about this time. Indeed it

9 The diary of Mr James Melville, 85.

10 M. Lee, 'King James's Popish Chancellor' in Cowan and Shaw (eds) The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland, (170-82) 171.

11 Forbes-Leith, Narratives of Scottish Catholics, 167.

12 Ibid., 173.

would seem that Ó Néill's interest amounted to something of an obsession as it was widely reported that he claimed James as his foster-son.¹³ The English suspected James of actively assisting Toirdhealbhach Luineach in encouraging his deployment of 'Inland Scots' and the presence of Irish agents at the Scottish court in 1582-3 seemed to confirm their suspicions.¹⁴

Three poems composed in Scotland by Fearghal Óg survive today. There is no way of pinning a definite date to any of them so that all I can do here is attempt to show that 1581 is not an improbable date with which to associate them. It will also be clear that whatever the favourable atmosphere at court may have been, Reformation-Edinburgh was another matter entirely.

The first observation one must make with regard to Fearghal Óg's poem beginning 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin'¹⁵ is that it is not a piece of counter-Reformation propaganda, but rather the personal response of a Catholic poet to the culture-shock experienced in Scotland after the first wave of Reformation had altered that country irrevocably. The poem begins with the poet lamenting his journey to Scotland¹⁶ in pursuit of worldly

13 Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Merc.*, 131, 137.

14 *Ibid.*, 147-8, 154-6. James was to maintain diplomatic links with Toirdhealbhach's successor, Aodh, to the consternation of Elizabeth: Willson, *op. cit.*, 148.

15 *Aith. D* 53. Two copies of the poem survive: RIA MS 23 I 40, pp. 179-81 and a transcript by Eugene O Curry in *Coláiste Chiaráin*, Cill Chaimigh MS CC1, pp. 332-41.

16 Note the similarity of expression between Fearghal Óg's 'tánag tar tuim tráichtfhionmfhuair/ go fionnAlbuin trá óm thoigh' (q. 26c) and the following lines addressed to Giolla Easbuig, Earl of Argyll (there were four Earls so named in the sixteenth century) by an anonymous Irish poet, 'tánuic mé [do] mhuin teagoisc/ aniar tar tombhóchna óm th[o]igh' (NL

wealth, to the detriment of his spiritual well-being. The reason for his visit is a dán luachmholta (q. 3c) which he has composed, but he finds the country devoid of Catholic clergy and he is therefore unable to hear mass or receive communion. In retrospect, his decision to travel was ill-advised: if he was possessed of all the wealth of Scotland the mass would still be the greater gain (qq. 1-7).

Mention of Scotland's disbelief in the presence of the Lord's 'tonn d'fhuil' (q. 8b) in the Host recalls an earlier tonn which destroyed a disbelieving Jew who pierced the Host with his knife (qq. 9-17).¹⁷ Following this apologue, and a brief reflection on disbelief in countries 'nach í Alba a-mháin' (a. 18a), the poet returns to his own predicament and requests God not to allow him to die in Scotland (q. 21d) but to restore him safely to Ireland and salvation (qq. 20-25) and the poem concludes with a remembrance of St Peter's tears of repentance (q. 26).

This is a composition of great urgency and immediacy. There is a marked absence of argument; there is no teasing out, for example, of the theological niceties of transubstantiation or the real presence. Rather, the case is stated, an apologue supplied to underline the moral, and the poet prays for delivery from his predicament. Apart from the obvious personal motivation behind the poem - Fearghal Óg's reunion with his conscience - it appears to me that the principal element underlying the whole piece

Scot. MS Adv. 72.2.2, f. 8v). This may be purely coincidental. For other instances of tig ó th(o)igh see Ross, Heroic verse XXIV. 16a, Breatnach, 'Chief's poet', 74 and cf. DIL T, 97.57-60.

17 For most recent remarks on this uirsgéal see Ó Caithnia, Apalóga na bhfilí, 192-3. Local tradition abounds in tales of blood flowing from sacred images; literary instances include Stokes, Tripartite life i, 72 and Iomarbhágh VI. 19b.

is visual.

We have noted that 1581 was a relatively good time for a Catholic, seeking audience with James VI, to be in Edinburgh. Outside his business at court, however, Fearghal Óg must have been struck by the ravaged state of the post-Reformation town. It would not have been unnatural for him to seek contact with the Franciscan order, perhaps to request lodgings on the strength of his connections with Donegal. He would have found no Grey Friars in Edinburgh, however, the Franciscan friary having been destroyed at the beginning of the Scottish Reformation, in June 1559.¹⁸ The Dominican friary had met with an identical fate in the same month,¹⁹ while the Carmelites had vacated their friary at Greenside in July 1563.²⁰ The house of the Augustinian Canons Regular at Holyrood Abbey had, with the Reformation, become the Protestant/Presbyterian parish church for the Canongate and remained so until 1688.²¹

This complete removal of every ord (cf. qq. 5d, 6b) from Edinburgh must have made a profound impression on our poet. Contemplating the ruins of these religious houses, he would have been only too aware of the degree to which iconoclasm formed such an integral part of the Reformation movement in the country to which he had come.²² Prior to 1559/60 the attention of the reformers was directed at the altars and furnishings of the religious houses.²³ 1559 saw

18 Cowan and Easson, Medieval religious houses Scotland, 131.

19 Ibid., 118.

20 Ibid., 136.

21 Ibid., 91; Harrison, The history of the monastery of the Holy-Rood, 209, 220.

22 My source for what follows is D. McRoberts, 'Material destruction caused by the Scottish Reformation' in idem (ed.), Essays on the Scottish Reformation, 415-612.

23 Cf. ibid., 419-20, for an illustration of what was involved in the 'casting down' of a religious house. For some early instances of such attacks in Edinburgh see Cowan, The Scottish Reformation, 109, 113.

the beginning of a new wave of attacks on ecclesiastical property so that 'by 1580, say, few, if any, large buildings remain intact'.²⁴ On the destruction of 1559 the same authority has written:

The altars and statues were still venerated by a very large proportion of the population and it is difficult for us to imagine the profound shock that must have been given by their wholesale destruction.²⁵

Walking along the High Street, Fearghal Óg would have observed the decay into which St Giles had been allowed to fall.²⁶ Writing in 1581 from the safety of Paris, Nicol Burne, a former professor of philosophy at St Andrews, summed up the scene which confronted our poet:

I desyre that ze schau me of onie ancient historie, that in onie aige the Christian men hes hed sik kirkis as ze haue nou in the realme of Scotland. That is the bair vallis destitute of all kynd of ornament, vithout dure, vindo or ruffe.²⁷

Closely related to this iconoclastic dimension is the second influence discernable in the poem. The primum mobile of the initial phases of Reformation in Edinburgh and elsewhere was John Knox. His attitude towards the mass is well known. He denied both transubstantiation and the real presence²⁸

24 McRoberts, loc. cit., 429.

25 Ibid., 435.

26 Ibid., 451-2, 453 n. 169.

27 Cited *ibid.*, 454.

28 M. Taylor, 'The conflicting doctrines of the Scottish Reformation' in McRoberts, *op. cit.*, (245-73) 249-51; Cowan, The Scottish Reformation, 105, 107.

and declared in a sermon in 1561 'That one Mass ... was more fearful to him than if ten thousand armed enemies were landed in any part of the realm, of purpose to supress the whole religion'.²⁹ A year earlier the Edinburgh Town Council had passed a proclamation denouncing the corrupt sacraments 'of baptism and of the bodye and blude of Jesus Christ' as practised by 'the papisticall kirk and be their ministeris'.³⁰ We have seen that, at the time of Fearghal Óg's visit in 1581, all was not harmonious between king and kirk. This gave rise to renewed condemnation of the Roman Church by the Edinburgh clergy: 'The minissters of Edinbruche all this whyll was maist fathfullie and wacryflie giffing the warning to all, anent the cours and practise of papists'.³¹

It is not surprising, then, that this aspect of Reformation doctrine should find a place in the popular literature and theatre of the time. In a poem published in 1567, for example, we find the following couplet: 'Give God was maid of bittis of bread/ Eit ye not ouklie sax or sevin?'.³² At the royal entry of Mary into Edinburgh in 1561, on her return from France, it was only at the insistence of the Earl of Huntly that plans to hold a pageant, depicting a priest being burned at the altar at the elevation of the Host, were scrapped.³³ A drama of a similar nature, intended for the entertainment of her son on his first entry into Edinburgh in 1579, met with a better fate. The final item on his agenda, before proceeding to Holyrood Abbey, was to witness 'ane brieff fabill for abbolishching of the paip & of the

29 Dickinson, John Knox's history of the Reformation in Scotland ii, 12.

30 Daiches, Edinburgh, 44.

31 The diary of Mr James Melville, 85.

32 McRoberts, op. cit., 175.

33 Mill, Medieval plays in Scotland, 89.

mess with the authoritie and asisteris thairof for evir',³⁴ at the Canongate mercat cross.

It is my impression that the visible effects of iconoclastic destruction in Edinburgh coupled with the possible witnessing of some display akin to those mentioned above, could have suggested his choice of uirsgeál to Fearghal Óg. Can it be entirely coincidental that in the apologue we find a perfect union of the two aspects of the Scottish reformation which we have been discussing?

D'éiliughadh cainte an chléirigh
tug sáthadh dian díchéillidh
dá sgiain chaoil ghairbhghil ghreanta
san mbairghin gcaoimh gcoisreactha. (q. 14)

The most obviously visual element in the poem is that which occurs in the first leathrann of q. 17:

Oiread na maraso a-muigh
do chuir san abhluinn uasuil.

Not only is it indicative of the spontaneity of the composition but it also gives us a rare and tantalising glimpse of the poet at work, producing an extremely apposite metaphor - recalling tonn at the beginning of the apologue (q. 8d) - from his immediate surroundings.

This raises the question of where the poem was composed and I believe that Edinburgh would be a most likely location. Another possibility would be somewhere on the west coast. In Appendix II it is suggested that Fearghal Óg may have had some contact

34 Ibid., 194.

with Argyll, centred, it would seem, on Mull or in a contiguous district. Evidence for the effect of the Reformation in the Highlands in the sixteenth century is slight though the general impression has been that due to the vastness of the area to be covered, the absence of urban bases and the difficulty in finding Gaelic-speaking clergy, the influence of the Reformed Church there was minimal, though the Catholic Church declined there little by little.³⁵ Outside the Highlands, in the north-east and south-west, the Catholic position was reinforced by the presence in those areas of prominent families supportive of the cause: the Gordons in the north-east, the Kennedy and Montgomery families in Ayrshire, the Maxwells in Dumfriesshire.³⁶

The west-coast was not, however, without its centres of Reformation. Galloway³⁷ and the town of Ayr³⁸ were active in this respect from quite an early period, and the theory that the Highlands remained relatively untouched by the Reformation during this period, has recently been challenged impressively by James Kirk.³⁹ The Reformation received the full

35 J. L. Campbell, 'The Catholic Church in the Hebrides: 1560-1760' in The Tablet ccvi (1955) 655-7; Withers, Gaelic in Scotland, 31-3.

36 Cowan, Regional aspects of the Scottish Reformation, 31-5; Sanderson, 'Catholic recusancy in Scotland in the sixteenth century' in The Innes Review xxi (Autumn 1970) (87-107) 95-8; idem in McNeill and Nicholson, An historical atlas of Scotland, 89-90, 204-7.

37 G. Donaldson, 'Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Galloway (1559-1575) and his work in the Reformed Church' in Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society Transactions 3rd ser. xxiv (1945-6) 111-28, and idem, 'The Galloway clergy at the Reformation' in ibid., xxx (1953) 38-60.

38 D. E. Meek and J. Kirk, 'John Carswell, Superintendent of Argyll: a reassessment' in Records of the Scottish Church History Society xix (1975) (1-22) 3.

39 J. Kirk, 'The Kirk and the Highlands at the Reformation', in North Scotland vii (1986) 1-22.

support of the Earls of Argyll⁴⁰ and it was to the fifth Earl, Archibald, that John Carswell dedicated his translation of the Book of Common Order in 1567.⁴¹ As Meek and Kirk point out, this work 'presupposes the existence of a literate group of Gaelic-speaking ministers, however small that group may have been' and suggests 'that the reformed faith had considerable vitality' in Argyll.⁴²

On Mull, the accession of Lachlann Mór to the chieftaincy in 1573 saw the acceptance by the Mac Leans of Duart - to whom the Beatons of Pennycross were official physicians (see Appendix II) - of the new religion. He had received a Presbyterian education in the Lowlands and in 1577 married Margaret, daughter of the fifth Earl of Glencairn, one of 'the first Scottish noblemen who favoured the Reformation'.⁴³ In March 1590 he was mentioned as one of the commissioners charged with executing the Acts 'against Jesuits and Seminary priests',⁴⁴ and four years later fought (unsuccessfully) alongside the seventh Earl of Argyll against the pro-Catholic Earls of Huntly and Erroll at Glenlivet.⁴⁵ This pro-Reformation zeal did not prevent Lachlann Mór from harassing Carswell's successor as Bishop of the Isles, John Campbell, in the years 1579-81⁴⁶ and one wonders to what extent such zeal was reflected among the inhabitants of the island. There was apparently still a priest there c. 1604⁴⁷ though by 1625 one of the

40 Meek and Kirk, loc. cit., 4-5.

41 Foirm na n-urruidheadh, 3.

42 Loc. cit., 16, 1.

43 Maclean Sinclair, The Clan Gillean, 108-11.

44 MacLean, History of the island of Mull ii, 74.

45 Maclean Sinclair, op. cit., 135-6.

46 M. Dilworth, 'Iona Abbey and the Reformation' in SGS xii (1971-6) (77-109) 102.

47 Giblin, Irish Franciscan mission, 54.

principal obstacles to the counter-Reformation mission was Lachlann Mór's descendant, Eachann Mór, who was regarded as a 'haereticus pertinacissimus'.⁴⁸

It is therefore possible that 'Dursan mh'eachtra go h-Albuin' was composed in Argyll. It is my impression, however, that the immediacy of the sense of shock expressed in the poem is suggestive of a location more appropriate to the heartland of the Scottish Reformation than to its periphery. Edinburgh - where we know Fearghal Óg was in 1581 - would be just such a location. It is always possible, of course, that the poem could have been composed in Argyll, say, after the poet's visit to the capital while his experiences there were still fresh in his mind.

An address to James VI of Scotland survives in eleven manuscript copies in all of which it is ascribed to Fearghal Óg.⁴⁹ It begins 'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais',⁵⁰ and whether or not it is the 'dán luachmholta' alluded to in 'Dursan mh'eachtra' is a question which we will consider.

The first two quatrains contain the statement of the theme of the three crowns and the three quatrains which follow these (qq. 3-5) identify each crown. Nine quatrains (qq. 7-15), five (qq. 16-20) and three (qq. 21-3) are then devoted to James's claims to the crowns of Scotland, England and Ireland

⁴⁸ Ibid., 81 (cf. 62).

⁴⁹ Book of the O Conor Don (ff. 406v-7r); Stoneyhurst MS A. 11. 20, Vol. ii, pt 2 (pp. 43-5); Kings Inns MS 4 (pp. 15-16); Br. Lib. MSS Egerton 158 (ff. 100r-102v), Egerton 112 (f. 485r-v); Maynooth MS M2 (pp. 64-7); RIA MSS A iv 3 (pp. 876-8), A v 2 (f. 41r-v), 23 N 15 (pp. 159-61), 23 G 23 (pp. 87-8), 3 C 13 (pp. 970-76).

⁵⁰ Aith. D 44; in all but the copies in A iv 3 and A v 2 the first line has the variant nom. pl. form coróine (IGT ii. 42).

respectively, and the poem ends with six eulogistic quatrains, four (qq. 24-7) treating of James's noble blood and two (qq. 28-9) of his wisdom.

It is in quatrain six that we find the central problem associated with this poem:

Inneosad a adhbhar soin
na trí coróna i gcarthaigh
ag rígh slóigh Gall is Gaoidheal,
ós am cóir dá chraobhsgaoileadh.

The problem concerns the identification of the 'am cóir' referred to here. Despite the fact that all commentators agree to date the composition to James's accession to the English crown in 1603⁵¹ this has been done without any consideration of the evidence of the poem itself and that evidence is not conclusive. Thus while 1581 would certainly have been an 'am cóir', just following James's assumption of power, and while we can find some support for this date in the poem, evidence can also be detected there for a later date.

The first indication that we may be dealing with a date later than 1581 comes in quatrain three:

An chéaduaire - cóir a cuimhne -
coróin Alban iathghuirme
- rí 'n-a chló cia ler cuireadh? -
ó Dhia dhó do deonoigheadh.

The fourth line here affirms that James's Scottish crown is a gift from God. There may be nothing of significance in this as it was a common sentiment held by the poets in their religious verse that all things

51 E.g. B Mus Catg. i, 55, ii, 226; Ériu viii (1915-16) 191 n. 1; BAR ii, 134.

came from God.⁵² On the other hand, it is difficult to ignore the fact that James VI himself was responsible for the forceful articulation of precisely this theory in his The Trew Law of Free Monarchies or The Reciproock and mutuall duetie betwixt a free King and his naturall Subiects published in 1598.⁵³ In this, James argued that a king, because he received his authority from God, was answerable only to Him and not, as his tutor Buchanan had taught, to the people:

the duetie, and alleageance of the people to their lawfull king, their obedience, I say, ought to be to him, as to Gods Lieutenant in earth ... hauing power to iudge them, but to be iudged onely by God, whom to onely hee must giue count of his iudgement.⁵⁴

If Fearghal Óg is indeed referring to this theory⁵⁵ perhaps we should also note, although a post-1598 date seems to be the implication, that even c. 1580-81 James, under the influence of Esmé Stuart, had begun to move away from Buchanan's teachings⁵⁶ and in 1584 the Scottish Parliament passed an Act specifically condemning Buchanan's De Jure Regni apud Scotos (the thesis of which James was to repudiate in The Trew Law) and Rerum Scoticarum Historia.⁵⁷

One of the most vexed questions in the

52 One of the most powerful expressions of this is Fearghal Óg's 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir', discussed below.

53 The Workes of the Most High and Mightie Prince, 193-210.

54 Ibid., 200.

55 It appears to have been more of an intellectual exercise than a statement of practical policy; see J. M. Brown, 'Scottish politics 1567-1625' in Smith (ed.) The reign of James VI and I, 26.

56 Willson, op. cit., 37-8.

57 Gatherer, The tyrannous reign of Mary Stewart, 6.

entire poem is the references, or supposed references, to James's mother, Mary Queen of Scots. The only clear reference to her, as far as I can see, is in quatrain thirteen where she is reckoned as the ninth Stewart monarch of Scotland:

Badh lé Alba ó mhuir go muir
 máthair an airdríogh uasail;
 do chuir sí an choróin ma ceann
 onóir í ar nach fuil foirceann.

From the context of the poem itself it is obvious that Mary is no longer ruler of Scotland but can we infer from the use of the past tense in q. 13a that she is also dead at this stage? This question leads us to consider two further quatrains which have been construed as referring to Mary:

Críoch Sagsan na gcoll gcorcra
 gan innte d'fhuil ríoghochta
 acht éinríoghan dá gclaon coill,
 craobh ler léirlíonadh Lonndoinn.

Ó ló na mnásoin a-mach
 a-tá id chairtse go cosgrach
 triath ríolunndan do rádh ruibh
 rádh na bhfíorughdar fíorthair. (qq. 18-19)

These quatrains, with quatrain seventeen, form the central part of the argument for the English crown. Quatrain seventeen refers to Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII, sister of Henry VIII and mother of James V of Scotland through her first marriage to James IV. She was also mother of Lord Darnley's mother, Margaret Douglas, through her second marriage to Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus. She was, therefore, James VI's

'seanseanmháthair' (q. 17a) on both sides.⁵⁸

The reference in quatrain eighteen is less clear. My translation would read: 'The land of England of the purple hazels, in it there is only one queen of royal blood before whom a wood bends low, a branch by which London has been illuminated'. If the use of the present tense in the third line is anything to go by, it would appear that whoever is referred to here was still alive at the time of composition. This was Professor Ó Concheanainn's interpretation also, taking it to refer to James's cousin, Elizabeth I: 'Queen Elizabeth (+ 1603) was very much alive when the poem was composed'.⁵⁹ However, he subsequently retracted this opinion⁶⁰ for no other reason, it seems, than that McKenna, in his notes to the poem, had said that q. 18c referred to Mary Queen of Scots: 'Elizabeth is set aside'.⁶¹ This was also the view of Professor Ó Buachalla who corrected Ó Concheanainn, adding: 'Nil aon dabht acht gur ar theacht i gcoróin do Shéamas a scríobhadh an dán seo'.⁶²

Ó Concheanainn, in his retraction, does not say whether or not he still believes that the subject of quatrain eighteen was still alive at the time of composition. It appears to me that the person referred to is indeed alive and well and that if this

58 Cf. genealogies in Dickinson et. al., *A source book of Scottish history* i, 177, ii, 126. In q. 17b Margaret is referred to as 'inghion airdríogh fhóid Sagsan' in Stoneyhurst and Kings Inns, and as 'máthair airdríogh fhóid Sagsan' in O Conor Don, A iv 3 and 23 N 15. This latter reading could also be correct if we emended Sagsan to Alban.

59 *Eigse* xv (1973-4) 249 n. 47.

60 *Celtica* xv (1983) 95 n. 26.

61 *Aith. D* ii, 241.

62 Ó Buachalla, 'Na Stíobhartaigh agus an t-aos léinn: Cing Séamas', *PRIA* 83 C, 85 n. 4. In a personal communication, Professor Ó Buachalla has confirmed to me that he believes that the reference in quatrain eighteen is to Mary and that the poem was composed on James's accession to the English crown. I find these views difficult to reconcile.

be Mary, then the poem must certainly have been composed prior to 8 February 1587 when Mary was executed at Fotheringhay.⁶³ However, it is not at all clear why James's mother should be referred to in this quatrain.⁶⁴ She had already been dealt with in quatrain thirteen and her presence in England, alive or dead, was of little consequence in the matter of James's succession to the English crown. It is my opinion that in quatrain eighteen Fearghal Óg is saying that there is only one person of royal stock alive in England, that is Elizabeth I, the implication being that as there is no-one in England eligible to succeed her,⁶⁵ the succession must fall to the Scottish line and James VI. From this it follows, in quatrain nineteen, that since Elizabeth came to the throne - 'Ó ló na mnásoin a-mach' - James has been on everybody's lips as her obvious successor.

There was no period in the reign of James VI when the question of a Stewart succession to the English crown was not topical. Before he was born, his mother had regarded herself as Elizabeth's successor.⁶⁶ On the occasion of James's entry into Edinburgh in 1579, Alexander Montgomerie, who was to become chief poet at James's court the following year, hinted at his succession in his poem 'The Navigatioun'. In this poem, four travellers journey from Constantinoble to Scotland and as they sail past England: 'They daskand farther: wat if the Quene war

63 Dickinson, Scotland from the earliest times to 1603, 348.

64 Neither is it apparent why London should have been illuminated by her as most of her time in England was spent in Sheffield Castle; see Donaldson, Mary Queen of Scots, 158.

65 The only person in England with a claim to the throne was Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp, and he was 'all but debarred by the dubious legality of his parent's marriage and in any case was not thought fit to rule', Willson, op. cit., 138.

66 Dickinson, Scotland from the earliest times to 1603, 334.

deid? / Quha suld be nixt, or to the crown
succeid?'.⁶⁷

At the trial of the Earl of Morton in 1581
(see above) one of the charges laid against him was:

And as concernying the yong King, he purposed to
put him in England for his weall, and that he
mycht the rather obtean his rycht to the crown
of England, being within the contre and brocht
up amang them.⁶⁸

It would therefore appear that it would have been by
no means inopportune of Fearghal Óg to be proclaiming
James's right to the English throne in Edinburgh in
1581. On the other hand, a later date would also be
appropriate because as James matured so his concern
with the English succession increased,⁶⁹ reaching a
new intensity in the period following 1595, when a
certain degree of domestic peace had been achieved
within Scotland,⁷⁰ so that by 1595 writers were vying
with each other in attempting to excell in the
literary articulation of James's claim.⁷¹

The treatment of James's claim to the Irish
crown is in stark contrast to that accorded those of
Scotland and England. One imagines that the amount of
space given to it is in inverse proportion to the
importance of the claim from the poet's point of view.
What is more surprising is that no genealogical
evidence is adduced to substantiate that claim.

67 Cranstoun, The poems of Alexander Montgomerie, 211 lines
227-8.

68 Memoirs of his own life by Sir James Melville of Halhill,
267.

69 Cf. A source book of Scottish history iii, 443-55.

70 Willson, *op. cit.*, 138.

71 *Ibid.*, 141.

A lámh as díorgha dligheadh
 - a-nois i gcéill cuirfidhear -
 ná bí ag teacht ar éineing d'uaim
 's do cheart ar Éirinn armruaidh.

I gcúirt Shagsan na sreabh seang
 a-tá ardchoróin Éireann;
 tuar maothchroidhe a bheith san mbrugh
 fa bhreith laochroidhe Lonndon.

Fada a-tá i dtairngire dhuit
 críoch Sagsan - is iúl orrdhruic;
 duit is dú Éire amhlaidh;
 is tú a céile ar comardhaibh. (qq. 21-3)

In these quatrains it is accepted as a natural corollary of James's succession to the English crown that the Irish one will follow as a matter of course. It cannot be for want of material that Fearghal Óg does not introduce the genealogical basis for James's claim. In the seventeenth century, native historians were able to trace James's ancestry back to origins in the four provinces of Ireland⁷² and it is inconceivable that our poet was unaware of this seanchas.

Neither can it be that this material was omitted in deference to a monarch ignorant of such matters.⁷³ James was certainly aware of the tradition which named Fearghas mac Eirc as the first king of Scotland. He would have known this either from Buchanan's history⁷⁴ or from the earlier work of

72 See Ó Buachalla, loc. cit., 125-6.

73 Nat. Lib. Scot MS Adv. 72.1.1, the manuscript containing Fearghal Óg's hand (see Appendix II), contains on f. 1 a genealogy of David I, printed in Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, 50; cf. Corp. Gen., 328-30.

74 Rerum Scotticarum Historia, Liber quartus, f. 28v. 17-18.

Hector Boece⁷⁵ which had been translated into Scots for James V by John Bellenden in 1536.⁷⁶ James refers to Fearghas in The Trew Law of Free Monarchies⁷⁷ and in a speech in Whitehall, 20 April 1614, he had the following to say regarding Ireland:

There is a double cause why I should be careful of the welfare of my people there; first, as King of England, by reason of the long possession the Crown of England has had of that land; and also as King of Scotland, for the ancient Kings of Scotland are descended from the Kings of Ireland.⁷⁸

It is my understanding of these quatrains that the poet is, as it were, wearing his diplomatic hat and viewing affairs from a Scottish angle. The Irish crown, after all, was but an abstract concept. The English crown was very much a real issue and Fearghal Óg may well be measuring his verses to suit the political atmosphere in which they were to be presented. We may also detect in q. 22cd a note of genuine anxiety that the succession to the English throne be secured by the Stewart line.

Quatrain twenty-seven of the poem is of special interest as it contains the most unequivocal hint of an early date for this poem:

Miorr nó túis ní théid tairrse
ar fhás d'fhíonfhuil ionnaibhse,
's ní hé an t-ór a séad samhail,
ní lór bréag a mbaramhail.

75 Scotorvm Historiae a prima gentis origine, lib I, f. VIIr. 1-3.

76 Watson, The Mar Lodge translation i, 54.

77 Workes, 201.

78 Cal. Carew MSS 1603-1624, 291.

We have here a clear reference to the gifts of the Magi - gold, incense and myrrh.⁷⁹ This, and the reference to 'prionnsa óg' in q. 5a, suggests that we are dealing with a young James but it does not necessarily follow that James must have been an infant at the time of composition. Epiphanic verses would still have been appropriate - and the reference to James's gníomha in q. 26d less exaggerated - in c. 1581. In this respect it is interesting that one authority has detected a parallel with the Magi in Motgomerie's poem of 1579 cited above, in which the author and three others, a Turk, a Moor and an Egyptian, journey from the East to do homage to the young prince.⁸⁰

The poem ends with two quatrains extolling James's wisdom, the second of which reads:

Eagna soghrádhach Soluimh
ar séan flatha fuarabhair
a shlat deaghabhla ón seang sreabh
geall deaghanma lat léighear. (q. 29)

The reference here to Solomon is interesting. James's erudition and learning were by-words, even at an early age. Thus, it was reported c. 1580-81 that 'he [sc James] wants neither words nor answers to anything said to him'⁸¹ and it may have been this reputation which prompted the allegorical sketch performed at Edinburgh's West Port on James's entry into the town in 1579:

That port presentit unto him the wisdome of
Solomon as it is written in the thrid [sic]

79 Matthew 2:11; cf. Aith. D 49.19.

80 Shire, Song, dance and poetry of the court of Scotland under King James VI, 84.

81 Willson, op. cit., 34.

chapter of the first buik of the Kings: That is to say King Solomon was representit with tua wemen that contendit for the young chylde. This done, they presented unto the King, the sworde for the one hand, and the scepter for the uther.⁸²

We also find the young king compared to Solomon in the poetry of that time. Alexander Montgomerie, in his poem already referred to of c. 1579, says of him:

So sapient a zing and godly King,
A Salomon for richt and judgment:
In every langage he is eloquent.⁸³

The poet whom Montgomerie replaced at court, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, in his 'Promine' printed in Edinburgh in 1580, addressed James as 'Thou Salomon facund in sapience'.⁸⁴ While such a comparison was no doubt traditional, even in Irish literature,⁸⁵ the association of James with Solomon seems to have been particularly emphasised throughout his reign⁸⁶ - prompting Henry IV of France's jibe that James might well be called Solomon as he was a son of David⁸⁷ (a reference to the rumour that he was really the son of Mary's secretary, David Riccio, murdered by Darnley and friends, 1566) - and it is possible that Fearghal Og's allusion is attributable to this influence.

On considering the evidence of the poem, I

82 The historie and life of King James the Sext, 178.

83 Cranstoun, op. cit., 207 lines 78-80.

84 Cawson, The poems of Alexander Hume, 209 line 127.

85 Cf. SG i, 89; POR X. 13a.

86 The convention whereby James is referred to as the 'British Solomon' is, however, of early nineteenth century origin: see OED s.v. Solomon.

87 Willson, op. cit., 145.

feel that, though some features point to a later date, there is little in the poem to rule out a date of c. 1581 for its composition which date has far more to recommend it than that of 1603.⁸⁸ It may therefore be that this is in fact the dán luachmholta referred to in 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin'.

The third poem composed in Scotland by Fearghal Óg is that beginning 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn',⁸⁹ a piece which was especially popular with eighteenth and nineteenth century scribes.⁹⁰ It is, on the whole, a happy poem in which the arrangement of the poet's thoughts is compact, unified and reinforced by the repetition of the word beannacht in nineteen of the twenty-six quatrains.

Having conveyed general greetings to Éire (qq. 1-2) Fearghal Óg specifies Ard Macha, Doire and Dún na nGall:

sí shaoilim do fhóir mh'aicme,⁹¹
róimh aoibhinn ar n-adhlaicne. (q. 4cd)

In qq. 8-12 greetings are sent to the inhabitants of the five provinces, one person being excluded in both Ulster and Munster. I deal with the latter below. The aonduine excepted from the poet's good wishes in q. 8b remains a tantalizing mystery to me, but I find it difficult to accept that the reason for Fearghal Óg's sojourn in Scotland is to be explained by a

88 The best argument against the 1603 date is that Fearghal Óg appears to have been out of favour with Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill at that time when he was banished to Munster; see the next chapter and Poem X, below.

89 IBP 5.

90 I have noted some twenty-four copies in manuscripts of that period.

91 The copies in RIA MSS A iv 3 and 24 P 13 read ní shaoilim nár fhóir mh'aicme here.

disagreement between him and this person.⁹²

A beannacht is sent 'go hógmhnaíbh na hÉireann' in q. 13 and in qq. 14-18 the professional learned orders are greeted enthusiastically: poets, historians, physicians, judges and musicians respectively. In the last of these classes one Ciothruadh (q. 18d) is singled out for special mention. One authority has written: 'Trying to find facts about Gaelic harpers ... is a very frustrating job, because in most cases there is only a single mention of a harper, often with no information except the name - and sometimes not even that'.⁹³ This observation applies to the present case and I have failed to locate any further reference to a musician named Ciothruadh. Fr Walsh suggested that the Ciothruadh Ó hEodhusa mentioned in English documents, 1586-1603,⁹⁴ might be the person referred to here⁹⁵ but this seems to be little more than guesswork. The name occurs in the genealogies of other learned families also.⁹⁶

In quatrains 21-3 the poet again salutes Éire, save that this time (qq. 21-3) a note of sadness and longing emerges. I feel that the sentiment of these quatrains is more akin to the general mood of poems of exile - e.g. MD 49-52 - than to that of 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin'. The composition is then rounded off with one quatrain each to Aodh Mág Aonghusa, Conn Ó Ruairc and St Peter.

I believe that a clue to the date of this poem may be found in quatrain 10. This is the

92 Suggested by Bergin in his introduction to the edition.

93 TGSi xlvii (1971-2) 143.

94 PRIA 36 C (1922) 95.

95 Irish men of learning, 237. This may be he who addressed a poem to either Aodh Gallda Ó Ruairc (d. 1564) or Aodh Buidhe Ó Ruairc (d. 1566), RIA MS 23 F 16, p. 211. An earlier poet of this name died in 1518: AFM v, 1340.

96 Cf. Irish men of learning, 4, 96.

quatrain in which the poet sends his regards to the people of Munster:

Beannacht uaim 's ní hiongnadh dhamh
go sluagh mórdhuasach Mumhan:
críoch a riaghla is náir⁹⁷ anois
acht amháin iarla an Fhorghais.

In his translation, Bergin interprets this fourth line as being syntactically connected to line c, adding, in his introduction, that 'the only strong native ruler was the Earl of Thomond, called in §10d 'the Earl of Fergus', from the river in South Clare'.⁹⁸ O Grady, however, read this line as following on from line b, which reading excludes Thomond from the general salutation to 'sluagh ... Mumhan'.⁹⁹ This would be my interpretation also.

O Grady further remarks that the Earl of Thomond in question is the fourth Earl, Donnchadh, 'a ruthless Elizabethan and harrier of his own immediate race and kin'.¹⁰⁰ This may well be true as Donnchadh does not appear to have been the most pleasant of individuals.¹⁰¹ However, we have seen that the third Earl, Donnchadh's father, Conchubhar mac Donnchadha, was responsible for the execution of Fearghal Óg's brother, Eoghan Ruadh, in 1572, '7 ro ba damhna aoire 7 easccaoine don Iarla an feillghníomh sin'. This

97 Bergin's edition reads nár. This is an editorial slip (cf. *Studies* ix (1920) 566) which went uncorrected in the 1970 edition. All the manuscripts read náir.

98 IBP, p. 37.

99 B Mus. Catg. i, 385.

100 Ibid., n. 3.

101 Cf. Walsh, *Irish chiefs and leaders*, 286-8; B. Ó Cuív, 'An elegy on Donnchadh Ó Briain, fourth Earl of Thomond' in *Celtica* xvi (1984) 87-105.

Iarla an Fhorghuis¹⁰² died in January 1581¹⁰³ and Fearghal Óg, being in Edinburgh, or on his way there, would probably have been unaware of this. He must have had a very strong reason indeed for naming Thomond in his verse - in contrast to the much more oblique 'acht aonduine' of quatrain 8b - and I feel reasonably certain that it was the third Earl who was intended.

There is nothing in the poem to gainsay this 1581 date. The allusion to the dire state of Gaelic rule in Munster in quatrain 10c is, in all probability, a reference to the unsuccessful second Desmond rebellion which was in the process of petering out in the autumn of 1580. In quatrain 12b we are told that the poet has yet to visit Leinster and I have mentioned this in the preceding chapter in the context of Fearghal Óg's poem to Fiachaidh mac Aodha Í Bhroin. The general impression of well-being and prosperity - cf. especially (in reference to Ulster) 'caor sluagh as neamhbocht¹⁰⁴ aniogh' q. 8c - is also suggestive of a relatively early date, though account must be taken of the tendency to idealize in compositions of this nature. Of significance also is the dedicatory quatrain to Aodh Mág Aonghusa (q. 24), one of only four addressed to him while he was still alive.¹⁰⁵ If the 1581 date is correct, this gives us the earliest date for Fearghal Óg's association with that chieftain.

102 He is given the same title in qq. 22a and 25b of Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird's 'Biaidh athroim ar Inis Fáil', *Celtica* xii (1977) 134, and cf. *Éigse* xiii (1970) 218.28b.

103 *NHI* ix, 220; *AFM* v, 1724 (s.a. 1580).

104 In the copies in A iv 3 and 24 P 13 this reads neamboichti: ar mbeannoichtne.

105 See Poem V, Introduction n. 40, below.

(vi) 1601 - 1605

Whatever Fearghal Óg's difficulties may have been in seeking some form of permanent patronage during the 1590s, they were as nothing compared to the misfortunes which befell him during the first decade of the seventeenth century. Like so many other poets, at this period his own problems became inextricably linked with those of Gaelic Ireland.

The opening years of this decade find our poet in Tír Chonaill. This territory was one of the few remaining strongholds of Gaelic power but even here the cracks were beginning to appear. The principal threat arrived in the person of Henry Docwra who, in April 1600, set sail from Dublin with an army of four thousand foot and two hundred horse and sailed into Loch Foyle in early May establishing a settlement and garrison at Derry.¹ This was, arguably, one of the most decisive events of the war prior to Kinsale, as it gave the English a foothold, for the first time, inside Ó Domhnaill's territory and an opportunity to weaken his power-base. The success of this strategy became immediately evident when the sons of Conn Ó Domhnaill (see Poem IV), under the leadership of Niall Garbh, joined forces with the English in October.² Docwra thereby gained an important, if precocious, ally, strengthening his hand in his efforts to subdue the adjacent territories of Fánad³ and Inis Eoghain.

The latter area, being adjacent to Loch Foyle, was one of the first places to receive Docwra's attention. The lord of Inis Eoghain, Seaán Óg mac Seaáin mheic Fhéilim Í Dochartaigh, was therefore, perforce, one of the first to resist this new English

1 Misc. Celt. Soc., 236-8; BAR i, 246-8.

2 Misc. Celt. Soc., 245; BAR i, 264.

3 See Poem III Introduction and q. 10a n.

onslaught. His resistance was shortlived, however, as he died, after a brief illness, on January 27, 1601. Fearghal Óg mourned his death in a poem of fifty-nine quatrains which I have edited in the present collection (Poem IX), and he introduces in it a note of despair and disappointment which marks this composition as a turning-point in the work of our poet. It is as if he recognised the significance of the fall of this first line of resistance, seeing in it an ominous token of the approach of still darker times.

In my Introduction to poem IX I have attempted to show how certain themes in that elegy for Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh are to be found again and again in subsequent compositions of Fearghal Óg which date from the early years of the seventeenth century. I have also noted that this poem, despite its despondent tone, ends on a note of hope, albeit somewhat contrived. The fragility of this optimism is clearly visible in his next composition which dates from the same year.

In early Autumn, 1601, Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill led a campaign into north Connacht. Taking advantage of his absence, Docwra despatched Niall Garbh to take Donegal town.⁴ This he did, billeting himself and his troops in the Franciscan monastery which had been abandoned by the Friars at the approach of the army. On hearing of this, Ó Domhnaill quickly returned and laid seige to the abbey. On September 19 a fire took place in the monastery, the cause of which was unknown to Docwra⁵ but which Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh attributed to the ignition of gunpowder caused by the wrath of God,⁶ destroying all but a small section of

4 Misc. Celt. Soc., 255.

5 Ibid.

6 BAR i, 306-8; AFM vi, 2252.

the building.⁷

This event is the subject of Fearghal Óg's poem beginning 'Do bháidh teine Tír Chonuille'.⁸ It is a composition of forty quatrains and, for the most part, is concerned with the plight of the bráithre bochta who have been forced to flee their home (qq. 13-32). Despite refraining from apportioning blame for this incident, it is clear that the poet sees in the destruction of the monastery yet another indication of the erosion of the status quo in Tír Chonuille. Not alone is Tír Chonuille suffering because of this (qq. 1-3, 12) but Ireland itself is the poorer (q. 20a). In this context, the most significant part of the poem is the closing section (qq. 33-6) preceding the complimentary quatrains to Mary, Jesus and Peter (qq. 37-40). Here he expresses the view that the destruction of the monastery represents the defeat of Ulster (q. 33) and he implores St. Francis to intercede with God on behalf of the people, especially the Conallaigh.

This sentiment could be dismissed as commonplace (cf. Poem IV in the present collection) were it not for the historical context in which it occurs. The antithesis between urgency and pessimistic despondency, is, I feel, stronger here than in the elegy for Seán Óg Ó Dochartaigh and the sense of foreboding greater.

These two poems, we must assume, were composed prior to the disaster of Kinsale which took place on January 3 1601/2 (Old Style). Three days

7 For a description and plan of the complex see Arch. Surv., 330-32.

8 Dán na mB. M 22; Di. D 81. The opening line is reminiscent of the fourteenth-century composition by Niall Ó hUigim to Tomás Mág Shamhradháin beginning 'Nír bháidh teine Teallaigh Eachach' (Magauran XXV) where, however, the verb is intransitive.

later Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill left for Spain. Before departing, he gave the responsibility of leading his people to his brother Rudhraighe until he should return again.⁹ Rudhraighe then undertook the arduous and dangerous journey northwards until they reached north Connacht. Here he and his people were to remain until early the following year, which time was spent protecting his people and property from English raids headed by Sir Oliver Lambert, having been refused assistance by Brian Óg Ó Ruairc.¹⁰

Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill died in the castle of Simancas, near Valladolid in Spain in September 1602.¹¹ The news did not reach Ireland until December and, when it did, the Lord Deputy, Lord Mountjoy, sent messengers to Rudhraighe informing him of the death of his brother and urging him to make peace. The 'Four Masters', who record this, tell us that Rudhraighe held a council with his advisers some of whom suggested that the reports were untrue while others maintained the opposite, urging that peace be made with the Lord Deputy.¹² This latter advice was heeded and Rudhraighe submitted to Mountjoy at Athlone in December 1602¹³ and with this, to all intents and purposes, the struggle in Tír Chonaill ended.

In a poem of sixty-nine quatrains beginning 'Teasda Éire san Easbáinn',¹⁴ Fearghal Óg lamented the death of Aodh Ruadh. In his introduction to this poem

9 AFM vi, 2326.

10 *Ibid.*, 2328-32.

11 *Ibid.*, 2296; *BAR* i, 344; Kerney Walsh, *Destruction by peace*, 22-3.

12 AFM vi, 2334.

13 *Cal. SP Ire. Eliz. 1601-1603*, 536, 553; Walsh, *Irish chiefs and leaders*, 194-6. Aodh Ruadh foresaw the result which news of his death would have: see *Stud. Hib.* xxiv (1984-8) 59.

14 P.A. Breatnach, 'Marbhna Aodha Ruaidh Í Dhomhnaill' in *Éigse* xv (1973-4) 31-50. Ó Caithnia's remarks on the authorship of this poem in *Apalóga na bhfilí*, 89, cannot be taken seriously.

its editor remarked: 'ní mó ná ag comhlíonadh an dualgais úd a bhí ar an ollamh dána de réir Memoirs of the Marquis of Clanricarde a bhí an file ann'.¹⁵ When the poem is seen in the context of the historical circumstances which surrounded its composition, and in the light of the poems composed by Fearghal Óg immediately before and after it (see below), one is forced to disagree with the editor's opinion.

It is true that Ó Domhnaill's passing is lamented in the traditional style: Éire is dead and with the chief in the grave (qq. 1-4, 32-6), nature is disturbed and out of joint because of his death (qq. 18-24). The burden of the elegy is that though Aodh was the prophesied one (qq. 26-31) the prophecy was unfulfilled (q. 25) and Aodh never reaped the reward for the trouble he endured for the sake of Ireland (qq. 37-55). There is, however, more to the poem than this.

As in the elegy on Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh, reference is made to the dispossession of the people (q. 5) which, as we have seen, was true for those in the train of Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill who did not return to Tír Chonaill from Íochtar Connacht until February 1603.¹⁶ The land has been overrun by danair (q. 12) but there is now no hope for the country, not simply because the Irish have lost an able leader, but, just as the poet feared in his lament for Ó Dochartaigh, the Irish have stopped fighting:

Do chuaidh rath ríoghraidhe Fáil
le hAodh Uisnigh don Easbáinn;
do chuir soin ceo ar in gcogadh
gleo ó shoin do sheachnador.

15 Loc. cit., 32.

16 AFM vi, 2340.

A hucht a anma a n-Iath Fhloind
an uair nach bíodh Aodh edrainn
do bhíodh maidhm romhainn 'na riocht;
maidhm orainn iar 'na imtheacht.

Ag Gaidhealaibh go nua a-nois
d'éis mheic Aodha meic Mhaghnuis
ní fhuil cuid do Chathraigh Fhloinn;
marthuinn duid a Í Dhomhnoill.

(qq. 62-4)

Surely there is, in these quatrains, an implicit contrast between the leadership of Aodh Ruadh and that of Rudhraighe, who was, after all, the reason that the gleo was avoided after 1602. Not only that but Rudhraighe immediately joined forces with the English to plunder Bréifne in revenge for Brian Óg Ó Ruairc's having refused to help him before he submitted.¹⁷ Ironically, this coincided precisely with the time that Niall Garbh, who had sided with the English up to this, became estranged from Docwra, having himself proclaimed 'Ó Domhnaill' in Kilmacrennan shortly afterwards.¹⁸ Indeed it was Mountjoy's intention from the moment of Rudhraighe's submission to advance the latter to the detriment of Niall Garbh.¹⁹

Rudhraighe's rule proved to be most ineffective. Much of his time from 1603 to 1605 was spent journeying between Dublin and London.²⁰ All indications are that he was unable to sustain any form of rule in his native territory and that this

17 Ibid.

18 Misc. Celt. Soc., 266-7.

19 Cal. SP. Ire. James 1603-1606, 24.

20 Kerney Walsh, *op. cit.*, 28, 30, 32; N. Canny, 'The flight of the Earls, 1607' in *IHS* xvii (1970-71) (380-99) 383.

continued to be the case up to his departure in 1607.²¹

Recalling that Rudhraighe's advisers were divided on whether or not he should cease resisting and submit, we may speculate that, on the evidence of 'Teasda Éire san Easbáinn', if Fearghal Óg was one of those consulted, he would not have recommended submission. He would have found support for this opinion from some of his fellow poets. I know of nine poems in all, composed between 1602 and 1608, which concern Rudhraighe. The earliest of these is attributed to Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa and begins 'Ní cothrom cogadh Banbha'.²² The burden of this is that many of the Irish and of the Conallaigh have given up the struggle but Rudhraighe is continuing the fight and will eventually reap the benefits of it. Rudhraighe was created Earl of Tír Chonaill in September 1603²³ and as there is no reference in this poem to him as Iarla, this, and the fact that he is mentioned as continuing the fight, leads one to conclude that the poem was composed sometime prior to his submission in December 1602. Perhaps it may not be reading too much into it to suggest that the poem may even have been connected with the advice which Rudhraighe sought on whether or not to submit.

If this was the case, Ó hEodhusa does not appear to have been too concerned that his advice was not taken as the only other composition we have from him addressed to Rudhraighe, is that beginning 'Ionmholta malairt bhisigh',²⁴ which complains of new

21 Canny, loc. cit., 389.

22 Copies consulted: RIA 23 F 16, pp. 44-6; 23 L 17, ff. 85r-86v; 24 P 27, pp. 158-63; Brussels MS 1631-3, ff. 7r-9r. Qq. 1-7 printed in B Mus. Catg. i, 479; qq. 11-54 correspond to DER 21.3-46.

23 Cal. SP Ire. James 1603-1606, 79-80, 139-40.

24 IBP 30.

literary practices while at the same time extolling the Earl's good taste. The fact that Rudhraighe is referred to as Iarla (qq. 5d, 7d, 9d) and that he is explicitly stated to be 'a Saxibh' (q. 10d), dates this poem, not to his first visit to England in 1603,²⁵ when he received his earldom, but rather to one of his two subsequent journeys there in either 1604 or 1605 (see above).

In fact, although the poets may have wished the struggle to continue, as indeed did Aodh Ó Néill,²⁶ some of them, at least, had no difficulty in accepting Rudhraighe's earldom. Such was the case with Cúchoigríche Ó Cléirigh who welcomed this event in his poem beginning 'Rug cobhair ar Chonallchaibh',²⁷ predicting prosperity for Éire and the defeat of her enemies. In a poem beginning 'Doirbh don chéidsheal cinneamhuin tairngeartaigh',²⁸ which must be dated to sometime after 1603, Gofraidh mac Briain Mheic an Bhaird says that, even since being proclaimed earl, Rudhraighe has still continued to endure hardships²⁹ (cf. q. 5) but from now on everything is going to be alright.

The only poets who appear to have suffered during Rudhraighe's period as Earl seem to have been Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird and Fearghal Óg. Eoghan Ruadh, from the start was uncertain as to the wisdom of Rudhraighe's decision to submit. This is clear from his poem beginning 'Dána an turas trialltar sonn',³⁰ composed while Rudhraighe was on his way to

25 Pace Bergin, *ibid.*, 127.

26 Kerney Walsh, *op. cit.*, 12.

27 Copies consulted: NLI G 167, pp. 266-9; RIA 24 P 27, pp. 84-8.

28 Di. D 83.

29 Typically, the motif of the catalogue of hardships (cf. Poem XII. 10n.) is brought into play, qq. 8-10.

30 IBP 2.

Dublin, before proceeding to London, and therefore dating from 1603. In this poem he tries to reassure himself that Rudhraighe is not walking into a trap, thus recalling the opinion expressed by those of his advisers who counselled him, in 1602, not to heed the English offer of peace:

Báttar foireann díobh agá rádha nár bhó fír
écc Í Dhomhnaill, 7 gur ab dia bhréccadh 7
dia thogaothadhsomh 7 dia accomhal fri
dligedh ro dolbhadh an sccél sin chuicce.³¹

Eoghan Ruadh also expresses the vain hope that Rudhraighe may still continue the fight: 'Taisbéntor sunn seal oile/ gnúis uathmhar na hamhsoine' (q. 8ab).

We next hear from Eoghan Ruadh in a poem beginning 'Diomdhach mé don mhacdhacht ríogh',³² wherein he complains that since Rudhraighe received his gairm iarlachta (q. 7a) the poet has ceased to receive the favour from his patron that he was wont to receive before 1603. If the poet is reproaching his patron here, he is doing it in a very mild fashion and taking the harm out of it by likening his relationship with Rudhraighe to that of a spoiled son with his father. One must assume that his request for improved patronage fell on deaf ears and that matters deteriorated subsequently, for when he reacted to the first news of Rudhraighe's death in 1608, in a poem beginning 'Truagh do chor a chroidhe tim',³³ it was not the Earl's death which affected him - this would otherwise have inspired indifference in him - but rather the despair which the news would cause in Ireland (q. 10). This explains why his heart is

31 AFM vi, 2334.

32 BAR ii, 104-17; DER 7.

33 IBP 4; DER 4.

troubled despite the fact that the Earl deserved nothing but resentment from him (q. 5).

Eoghan Ruadh's dissatisfaction was already clear in 1606 when, in a poem apparently celebrating the birth of Rudhraighe's son Aodh, he commented:

Ó ló éaga Aodha Ruaidh
atá an laochruidh lán d'anbhuaín,
i gceas naoidhion gus anocht
bheas ag caoineadh a gcumhacht.³⁴

On the other hand, however, it must be said that in his formal elegy for Rudhraighe, beginning 'Maith an sealad uair Éire',³⁵ Eoghan Ruadh suppresses his personal resentment to the point where the only hint of reproach occurs when he suggests that the Earl left Ireland because he did not have the stomach for fighting (qq. 24-9, 61).

I have felt it necessary to mention these poems to the Earl of Tír Chonaill as it is useful to be aware of what other poets thought of him when we look at his relationship with Fearghal Óg. In the Introduction to Poem X, I have suggested that our poet was in Munster in 1603 or shortly afterwards when he may have presented an elegy on Oliver Hussey to members of his family in Kerry. I have also mentioned there that Fearghal Óg addressed a poem to Rudhraighe from Munster sometime after he had been made Earl and that 1603 or 1604 would not be an inappropriate date for this composition.³⁶ This poem begins 'Turnamh

³⁴ DER 2. 3.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 13.

³⁶ The statement by Cunningham and Gillespie that Fearghal Óg was 'out of Ireland' between the years 1603-18 cannot have been the result of a careful examination of the evidence; *Éigse* xx (1984) 111.

dóchais díoth muirne'³⁷ and in it the poet gives us to understand that he was enjoying some sort of prominent status in Tír Chonaill prior to ré Rudhraighe (qq. 7d, 32d). This is to be inferred from q. 19bc, 'bheith céim ós chionn na n-éigeas/ do bhí uair 's do aontaigh mé', and from references to himself as an ollamh flatha (q. 24b)³⁸ and to the prosperity and position he once enjoyed (q. 31). However a serious disagreement arose between them³⁹ because of which Rudhraighe deprived the poet of his patrimony (q. 33ab) and banished him to Munster ar deora(i)dh(e)acht (qq. 23c, 34d) so that now Fearghal Óg finds that he obtains no advancement in his profession while those in Tír Chonaill, whom he would regard as his inferiors, are preferred to him (qq. 7-9, 21). (This is reminiscent of his complaint to Aodh Ruadh in q. 13 of 'Ionnmmas ollaimh' discussed in chapter (iv) above.)

No reason for this disagreement is given and the poet seems to alternate between a willingness to share the blame with Rudhraighe (qq. 18c, 22-3, 31) and placing all the blame on the latter (qq. 8, 24-6, 33). It might be inferred that the disagreement was purely personal, Fearghal Óg asserting his claims to continued patronage so strongly - perhaps in terms similar to that of 'Ionnmmas ollaimh' - that Rudhraighe

37 Di. D 121.

38 Professor Breatnach ('The chief's poet', 50-51) also noted this but cited, as an argument against it, a quatrain from 'Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag' which he interpreted as displaying dissatisfaction with all of the sons of Aodh mac Maghna for not according him his due patronage. In my discussion of that poem, below, I suggest that this interpretation is incorrect. Professor Breatnach also uses the present poem to illustrate the special meaning which the words muir and cogar had in this type of poetry (ibid., 44, 50). See discussion of Fearghal Óg and Aodh Ruadh in chapter (iv).

39 A number of words are employed to describe the emotions aroused: dímhiadh (q. 6d), goimh (q. 8c), fearg (q. 18c), anaoibh (qq. 23b, 26b).

took offence and banished him. On the other hand, we have seen that Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird was apparently in a similar position though he did not experience banishment. Both Eoghan Ruadh and Fearghal Óg may have disagreed with Rudhraighe's policy of submission and it is just possible that our poet was the more vocal of the two at the time or that Eoghan Ruadh's special attachment to Rudhraighe's sister Nualaidh⁴⁰ saved him from a fate similar to Fearghal Óg's.

In any case, this poem represents a further stage in the decline in the fortunes of our poet and, in a sense, marks a watershed in his work as he looks back at his former prosperity and complains of his present lot. There is a note of despair in this poem which anticipates his Louvain poems (see below) and one is reminded, especially, of 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir',⁴¹ which I discuss in detail below. In particular, q. 31 might be construed as containing the seed for the later poem, especially as it prefigures it verbally:

Groighe is táinte clann gConuill,
tús is earr an uraghuill,
fa-ríor níor haltoigheadh liom
im ghartoirear ríogh Raoilíonn.

'Ní maith altuighim' is, of course, a very different sort of poem with its mixture of secular and religious references. 'Turnamh dóchais' contains one biblical allusion. This is in the last of three proverbial sayings occurring in the poem⁴² when, referring to

⁴⁰ E.g. cf. IBP 2.22-3; DER 9.28.

⁴¹ Di. D 46.

⁴² The other two are at qq. 11d and 19d respectively.

his own predicament, he quotes the New Testament⁴³:
'ní fádh duine 'na dhúthchas'.

It is not certain when Fearghal Óg's exile in Munster came to an end. The poem beginning 'Slán agaibh a fhiora Mumhan',⁴⁴ could belong to his earlier and happier sojourns there (see above) but it is just possible that it refers to the end of his exile, Rudhraighe, perhaps, having responded favourably to 'Turnamh dóchais'. It is clear from 'Slán agaibh' that the poet is headed for Tír Chonaill (qq. 1c, 2c, 5a) and is in something of a hurry (qq. 1b, 2b). One must assume from the complimentary references to the Earl in 'Mór an lucht arthraigh Éire',⁴⁵ and in 'Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag',⁴⁶ (these poems are discussed in the next section) that a reconciliation was effected and it is certain that he had left Munster by 1605, in which year he mourned the passing of Tadhg Ó Ruairc⁴⁷ in a poem which closely parallels, thematically, his earlier elegies for Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh and Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill.⁴⁸

43 Matthew 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24; John 4:44.

44 IBP 7.

45 *Dí. D* 107: 'Rudhraidhe dil' q. 5a.

46 *IBP* 8: 'Rughroidhe Cabha dár ccrádh/ mana turbhuidhe a thernádh' q. 3cd.

47 Poem XI in the present collection.

48 See Introduction to Poem IX.

(vii) 1607-1618

The first decade of the seventeenth century was not yet over and already Fearghal Óg had mourned the death of three of his patrons: Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh, Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill and Tadhg Ó Ruairc. In addition, he had been forced by Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill to exile himself in Munster where he lamented the death of Oliver Hussey. It was, then, a traumatic period in the life of our poet and the trauma was not yet abated, either for him or his fellow poets.

One of the most decisive events in the conquest of Ulster took place in September 1607 when the Earls of Tír Chonaill and Tír Eoghain, together with Cú Chonnacht Óg Mág Uidhir and their retinues, departed from Rathmullan¹, on a ship procured in Nantes by Mág Uidhir earlier that summer². We have seen that while Kinsale was perceived as just a setback in the struggle and that Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaired argued that the fight should continue, the recognition that times were changing was reflected in new themes and motifs in Fearghal Óg's poetry. The changing times were starkly illustrated in the departure of those who had been foremost in the struggle and the poets who were left behind responded as best they could to what must have been a bewildering and disheartening event.³

Following his elegy on Ó Ruairc, dated to

1 See Poem III. 10a n.

2 The background to the flight is analyzed by Nicholas Canny, 'The flight of the Earls, 1607' in *IHS* xvii (1970-71) 380-99; and by Kerney Walsh, *Destruction by peace*, 37-60.

3 The statement that Fearghal Óg left Ireland with the Earls (*Éire - Ireland* (1984) 100) is not borne out by an examination of the evidence.

1605 (Poem XI), our next surviving poem from Fearghal Óg concerns this departure. It begins 'Mór an lucht arthraigh Éire',⁴ and is best evaluated in the context of two other poems dealing with the same event: that beginning 'Mo chean don loingsi tar lear',⁵ the author of which is unknown, and a poem beginning 'Anocht is uaigneach Éire' of which two versions are extant, a short version,⁶ ascribed to Aindrais mac Marcuis,⁷ and an expanded version⁸ attributed to Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird in Brussels MS 1631-3, f. 42r. That these poems are contemporary, and were all composed on the occasion of the flight in September 1607, is shown by the fact that all three refer to Spain as the destination of the ship.⁹ They were therefore not yet aware that bad weather had forced the Earls to land in France.¹⁰

Of the three, 'Mo chean don luingsi tar lear' is the shortest and is concerned merely with wishing the travellers well (qq. 1-2, 14-15), enumerating the principals (qq. 3-5, 10-13) and referring generally to the bereft state in which Ireland finds herself after the flight (qq. 6-9, 16). 'Anocht is uaigneach Éire' is a different matter. If the poem is, in fact, by Eoghan Ruadh, then this would be entirely consistent with what we know of his other work as in this poem the author is forthright in

4 Di. D 107.

5 BAR ii, 118-25; Ní Dhomhnaill, Duanaireacht, 91-3.

6 Ed. Knott, Eriu viii (1915-16) 191-4.

7 Thought to be either a member of Clann Mheic Craith (*ibid.*, 191) or of Clann Ghnímh (BAR ii, 147).

8 BAR ii, 138-48.

9 'Anocht is uaigneach' q. 2d; 'Mo chean don loingsi' q. 7b; 'Mór an lucht arthraigh' qq. 9d, 37b. Fear Flatha Ó Gnín's lament for Ireland's deprivations is also possibly to be dated to this period as it also refers to the Earls having gone to Spain: IBP 26.3.

10 Walsh, The flight of the earls, 10-12.

regarding the flight as a forced exile: hence the references to ionnarbadh, díobart and fógra throughout the poem (qq. 1b, 2d, 4b, 11ad). As we have seen, in 'Maith an sealad uair Éire' he stops just short of accusing Ruadháighe Ó Domhnaill of cowardice, and in 'Anocht is uaigneach', which predates 'Maith an sealad' by a year, he sees the ionnarbadh of the northern chiefs as a direct result of God's anger from which there will be no respite until they repent their sins.

This is a theme which surfaces prominently at this time¹¹ but the only trace of it in Fearghal Óg's poem is in the first uirsgéal (qq. 19-23,; the second occurs when he likens the ship to the Argo, qq. 27-35) when Mág Uidhir is compared to Noah who saved his company from the flood which had been caused by 'fearg Íosa' (q. 22a). The Ark is therefore 'long Mhéig Uidhir' (q. 29a) and the flood is 'fearg eachtrann' (q. 24b) but the idea of God's anger is not pursued outside the uirsgéal.¹²

'Mór ar lucht arthraigh Éire' is in agreement with both of the other two poems in recognising the loss to Ireland which the flight represents (qq. 1-7) but Fearghal Óg attempts to come to terms with that loss through representing it as a creach taken from Ireland by Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir. Where 'Mo chean don loingsi' was divided between the loss to Ireland and wishing the Earls good luck in their journey, and 'Anocht is uaigneach' came down firmly on the side of despair, our poet's composition seems more undecided as to what attitude to take to

11 B. Ó Buachalla, 'Na Stíobhartaigh agus an t-aos léim: Cing Séamas' in PRIA 83 C (81-134) 102-12.

12 Ó Buachalla, ibid., 107, is thus quoting Fearghal Óg out of context in referring to this poem as evidence for the 'fearg Dé' theme.

this national disaster. In this he was probably at least as close to the spirit of the times as the author of 'Mo chean don loingsi'. He regards their journey to Spain (see above) as a joyous occasion - presumably because he hopes they will return to reclaim Ireland - while he grieves for Ireland who is deprived of them:

Do chuir fháilte ar chroidhibh cáigh
toisg na nIarladh don Easbáin
's tug a ndul tar fairrge bhfinn
gul gacha hairde i nÉirinn. (q. 37)

Although the Earls are referred to in qq. 2-6 the main emphasis is placed on the part played by Mág Uidhir. Apart from Tadhg Ó Cianáin and the 'Four Masters', it seems to me that Fearghal Óg is the only other native author to allude in detail to the immediate background to the flight (qq. 12-18). This emphasis on Cú Chonnacht's role in the events suggests that perhaps our poet may have been seeking patronage in Fermanagh at the time. This suggestion is to some extent supported by the evidence of his next datable composition.

In August 1608 Cú Chonnacht Óg Mág Uidhir died of a fever in Genoa.¹³ As the news filtered back to Ireland Brian Ó Corcráin, not yet quite sure that the news was true, composed a short poem of seven quatrains mourning the death.¹⁴ Some years previously the same poet¹⁵ had composed a poem to Cú Chonnacht in

¹³ Walsh, op. cit., 240; AFM vi, 2366.

¹⁴ Pól Breathnach, 'Dánta Bhriain Í Chorcráin' in IMN (1929) (35-50) 45.

¹⁵ For his work as a scribe and translator see B Mus. Catg. ii, 353-4.

praise of the latter's dog, Ábhartach.¹⁶ It appears that the death of the dog coincided with that of his master and this provided Fearghal Óg with an opportunity to lament the chief who died in Italy by lamenting his dog who died in Ireland.

It begins 'Teasda easgcara an fhiadhaigh',¹⁷ and its basic argument is that the wild animals of Ireland, previously hunted by this great dog, will now live peacefully because Ábhartach has died from grieving for the absence of his lord. Though the conceit is quite clever, this seems to me to be rather a light-weight composition, in no way comparable to the elegies in the present collection (Poems IV, IX, X and XI). Literary critics might claim that the poet uses the dog as an objective correlative for his master but, whether or not this is the case, I believe that the poem may be preliminary to an intended full-blown elegy (cf. chéadmharbhna q. 19c).

In the complimentary quatrains which conclude the poem (qq. 28-9), Fearghal Óg emphasises the honours he would receive from Aodh Mág Aonghusa and Conn Ó Ruairc were they still alive. The point of this can only be that he is suggesting that he should receive the same from whomever the poem was presented to, probably either Cú Chonnacht's successor Conchubhar Ruadh, or his brother Brian. This suggestion finds support in the poem itself where the poet says that were Cú Chonnacht to assess this composition Fearghal Óg would get a reward from him for it:

Ar measadh don mharbhnaidh thiar
dá maireadh tuir fhear nOirghiall

¹⁶ IMN (1929) 42-4; Di. D 112.

¹⁷ Di. D 118.

a buaidh do-bhéarainn dá thail
do-ghéabhainn uaidh a urdhail. (q. 20)

The poet was probably mindful of the honours he had received from Cú Chonnacht's father¹⁸ and perhaps the production of a full-blown elegy was dependant on his receiving a similar reward for this composition. In any case no such elegy survives today.

The Irish party had left Flanders in February 1608 and arrived in Italy two months later.¹⁹ Cú Chonnacht's death in Genoa was just one of a series of misfortunes to befall them during the late Summer and early Autumn of that year. Two weeks earlier Rudhraighe, Earl of Tír Chonaill and the cause of Fearghal Óg's exile in Munster six years previously, died in Rome on the 28th of July.²⁰ His brother, Cathbharr, had caught the same deadly fever but lingered for a month and a half until he died on the 15th of September and was buried beside his brother Rudhraighe in the church of San Pietro Montorio in Rome.²¹

Cathbharr was the last son of Aodh mac Maghnasa to die. That chief had six sons in all: two by an early marriage and four by the Inghean Dubh. He had, in addition, four daughters, three of whom were by the Inghean Dubh.²² This later family consisted of Maghnas, Aodh Ruadh, Rudhraighe, Cathbharr, Mairghréag, Nuala and Máire. Of these, Maghnas had

18 DMU I-V; see discussion above, chapter (iv).

19 Kerney Walsh, *Destruction by peace*, 73-4, 80.

20 Walsh, op. cit., 238-40; AFM vi, 2364-6.

21 Walsh, op. cit., 238-42; AFM vi, 2368 (which gives 17 September as the date of Cathbharr's death).

22 Aodh mac Maghnasa's sons and daughters are listed by Cúchoigcríche Ó Cléirigh in his elegy for Máire (see below) beginning 'Ní deireadh leóin do leath Cuim' (NLI MS G 167, pp. 292-5); the list occurs in qq. 10-12. Cf. Walsh, *The Ó Cléirigh family of Tír Conaill*, 21-2.

been the first to die, mortally wounded by Niall Garbh Ó Domhnaill in a skirmish outside Lifford in 1600, predeceasing his father by two months.²³ As we have seen, Aodh Ruadh died in 1602, and Rudhraighe and Cathbharr in 1608.

This left the three sisters. Nuala had fled from Ireland with her two brothers on board 'long Mhéig Uidhir' in 1607.²⁴ Behind her she left her two sisters: Mairghréag, wife of Cormac, brother of the Earl of Tír Eoghain, Aodh Ó Néill - she was subsequently to go to Flanders in 1622²⁵ - and Máire, widow of Tadhg Ó Ruairc (see Poem XI), who was to remain in Ireland until her death in 1662.²⁶ We do not know when Nuala and Mairghréag died, save that they were dead before Máire (as is clear from Cúchoigcríche Ó Cléirigh's elegy) and that they were both buried in Louvain²⁷, where, incidentally, it is likely that Fearghal Óg ended his days (see below).

However, they were, all three, very much alive when Fearghal Óg addressed the poem to Máire and Mairghréag which begins 'Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag'.²⁸ This is a short poem of fifteen quatrains and in it the poet sympathises with the two sisters on the deaths of their four brothers. We note, lest there should be any doubt concerning this point, that the poem was composed in Ireland: cf.

23 AFM vi, 2212-8.

24 See the lists of those who travelled in C. Mooney, 'A noble shipload' in *The Irish Sword* ii/7 (Winter, 1955) 195-204. (These lists reprinted in Kerney Walsh, op. cit., 184-5, 211-4.)

25 Kerney Walsh, op. cit., 60.

26 Date given in q. 41 of Ó Cléirigh's elegy cit. n. 21. For a sketch - not altogether accurate - of the daughters of Aodh mac Maghnasa see Walsh, 'Hugh Roe O'Donnell's sisters' in *IER* xix (1922) 358-64.

27 Walsh, *Irish men of learning*, 192.

28 IBP 8; see Appendix VI for other editions.

'abhus' q. 7b. We also note that Fearghal Óg speaks highly of each of the dead men (qq. 3-9). This is important because of Professor Breatnach's suggestion that q. 9 contains our poet's 'parting shot',²⁹:

Ceithre héigneada ón Bhóinn bhrais,
ceithre mic d'Aodh mac Maghnais,
cuan dreagan nár dháil a rún,
dháibh nír bh'eagal acht iomthnúdh.

Professor Breatnach would interpret line c in the light of his important researches into aspects of the relationship between a poet and his patron and the vocabulary used in the poems to express this. When a poet is privy to his chief's rún it signifies that he has been taken into his confidence and this, in turn, is one of the tokens which indicate that the poet has achieved the coveted position of 'chief's poet'.³⁰ Thus Breatnach translates lines cd 'brood of champions who shared not their secret, they had nothing to fear but jealousy' and comments: 'Here, it appears, we have the parting shot of Fearghal Óg directed towards those who by unwillingness to 'impart their secret' had thwarted the achievement of the poet's lifelong ambition'.

The first thing to be said is that Professor Breatnach is mistaken in believing that the poem was composed 'in Louvain late in life'. In broad terms it is obvious that it was composed before Máire and Mairghréag were separated by the latter's departure for Flanders (see above) and I will be suggesting a more precise dating further on. This dating will show that the poem predates not only Fearghal Óg's Louvain

29 'The chief's poet', 51.

30 See Poem III.7a n.

poems, but also his lament for the death of Aodh Ó Domhnaill of Ramelton, if not also his address to Aodh Ó Néill (see below), so that this poem is far from being our poet's parting shot.

Furthermore, Breatnach does not explain the reference to iomthnúdh in line d but the implication may be that this is Fearghal Óg's reaction to being rejected by the four. However, in my Introduction to Poem IX in the present collection, I have shown that tnúdh is a word which recurs in Fearghal Óg's poetry in this period and refers to the only thing which can overcome a superlative warrior: the envy of those he has surpassed. This envy has particular relevance in the context of the divided struggle of the 1600s and we have seen that the death of one of the brothers, Maghnas, was a direct consequence of that lack of unity.

Bergin translated line c as 'brood of champions unswerving in purpose' and Paul Walsh's translation read 'a group of dragons who divulged not their purpose'.³¹ We have certain proof of this as an idiom of praise in Fearghal Óg's appeal to Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire: 'iris naomh nach ronnfa a rún' (IBP 6.18d). (This is also cited by Breatnach, but rather than supporting his thesis it contradicts it.) It seems to me, therefore, despite the attraction of Professor Breatnach's argument, that Bergin and Walsh got it right here, and that the reference is to be construed as meaning that the four brothers remained united in their resolve to defeat their enemies, the English, and could only have been overcome by the iomthnúdh of their adversaries and of their fellow countrymen.

Crucial to the dating of this poem are two quatrains on the third sister, Nuala:

31 BAR ii, 129.

San Eadáil na n-eas dtana,
 ionand is ég Nualadha,
 atá géis chnómhoighe Chuinn,
 cróluighe dhá héis oruinn.

Nualaidh dhuaislíonmhar, dóigh cháigh,³²
 mairfidh go laithe an luanbhráith
 tosach garma chrúgCríomhthain
 clú a hanma idir Éiriondchaibh. (qq. 5-6)

Fr Paul Walsh was slow in accepting that these quatrains were not saying that Nuala is dead but rather that her exile in Italy, when viewed from the perspective of her sisters and the poet back in Ireland, is the equivalent of death.³³ Fearghal Óg seems to have been anxious to include all the children of Aodh mac Maghnasa and the Inghean Dubh in the one poem and hence the references to Nuala. This is important for two reasons.

Firstly it enables us to date the poem with a reasonable amount of certainty. We have seen how the Earls arrived in Italy in April 1608. In their party was Nuala.³⁴ She did not return from Rome until late 1611.³⁵ 'Truagh liom Máire agas Mairghréag' may therefore be dated to sometime between those years and it does not seem unlikely to me that the news of the

32 As pointed out by Professor Ó Cuív (*Éigse* xv (1973-4) 16), we should read cáich here. He also suggests (*ibid.*) that San Eadáil in q. 5a should be read as 'S in 'It is in ...'; see Poem XI.40a n.

33 With the translation in the *Catholic Bulletin* xviii (1928) 627 and *BAR* ii, 127 (where the commentary states that she is alive, *ibid.*, 134) compare *Irish men of learning*, 181. Bergin's translation, which predated Walsh's, was accurate.

34 B. Jennings, 'The career of Hugh, son of Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tirconnell, in the Low Countries, 1607-1642' in *Studies* xxx (1941) (219-34) 219.

35 *Ibid.*, 220, 226; Kerney Walsh, *op. cit.*, 278, 280, 284.

death of Cathbharr³⁶ in September 1608 may have been the reason for its composition and that it may thus be almost contemporary with 'Teasda easgcara an fhiadhaigh' (discussed above).

The second reason for the importance of the reference to Nuala is that it means that this poem is also roughly contemporary with Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird's well-known composition 'A bhean fuair faill ar an bhfeart',³⁷ in which the poet depicts Nuala as mourning her two brothers and Aodh Óg mac Aodh Í Néill,³⁸ son of Nuala's half-sister Siobhán, at their tomb in San Pietro Montorio. (The picture which both poets draw of Nuala, alone after the death of her brothers and kinsmen, recalls that of the folk poem which Niall Ó Dónaill suggested referred to Nuala.³⁹) Eoghan Ruadh's poem is much more formal than Fearghal Óg's, including as it does a composite caithréim for the three dead men (qq. 17-29). Paradoxically, however, despite its formality, 'A bhean fuair faill' ends on a personal note with the poet advising Nuala to seek comfort in religion (qq. 32-9) whereas Fearghal Óg, in his poem, sees no prospect of comfort - he wonders how Máire and Mairghréag can continue to live (qq. 12-13) - and indeed appears to detach himself from the subject of his poem while, in the penultimate quatrain, he ponders on the effect of the deaths on Ireland:

36 Cathbharr's son, Aodh, died in Flanders in 1625 (Jennings, loc. cit., 229) and Uilliam Óg mac Uilliam Óig Mheic an Bhaird addressed a poem to Máire on the subject: 'Tinn liom do mhaoith a Mháire' G 167, pp. 289-91.

37 E. Knott, 'Mac an Bhaird's elegy on the Ulster lords' in *Celtica* v (1960) 161-71; DER 11.

38 Died September 1609: Walsh, *The flight of the Earls*, 192-3; Kerney Walsh, op. cit., 98-9.

39 *Donegal Annual* ix/2 (1970) 203-7; Ó Muirgheasa, Dhá chéad de cheoltaibh Uladh, 347-50.

Ní hí Mairgréag ná Máire
 chaoimh, is cúis diombáighe,
 acht an cor-sa ar cró na bhFionn
 mó sa mhó osna Éiriond. (q. 14)

Another poem by Fearghal Óg connected with the flight is Poem XII in the present collection, addressed to the Earl of Tyrone, Aodh Ó Néill. It can be dated only roughly between the years 1608-1616, when Ó Néill was living out the end of his life in Rome. In it, the poet confidently predicts that Ó Néill will return and reap the rewards for the hardships he endured before leaving. Among the points of interest in this composition are the mixture of old and new motifs - the catalogue of hardships, and the prophecy (Aodh Eanghach) theme on one hand, the children of Israel theme on the other - and the implicit criticism of Ó Néill for causing harm to Ireland by leaving her (q. 46).

The last extant poem composed by Fearghal Óg in Ireland, before leaving for Louvain (see below), is datable to 1618, two years after the death of Aodh Ó Néill. It begins 'Ní tráth aithreachais d'fhuil Chonaill'⁴⁰ and concerns the death of 'mac Í Dhomhnaill' (q. 14b), Aodh Óg mac Aodha Í Dhomhnaill (q. 51a). This Aodh died in 1618⁴¹ and, as his father, Aodh Dubh mac Aodha Ruaidh, died on 5 July 1537,⁴² he must have been a very old man when he died. At the time of his death he was living at Ramelton, on the Fánad Peninsula, where he had received one thousand acres of land under the Ulster Plantation.⁴³

⁴⁰ Di. D 110.

⁴¹ BAR ii, 96.59.

⁴² AFM v, 1436-8.

⁴³ Hill, An historical account of the plantation in Ulster, 329; Anal. Hib. viii (1938) 210.

Among his neighbours there were Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh and Seaán Ó Cléirigh.⁴⁴ This proximity probably explains how Seaán Ó Cléirigh⁴⁵ and Aodh Óg Ó Domhnaill came to involve themselves in 'iomarbhágh na bhfileadh' on the side of Lughaidh.⁴⁶ It is also probably a contributory factor in the lengthy prose-panegyric of Aodh Óg which Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh inserted in his life of Aodh Ruadh.⁴⁷

Among the compliments which Lughaidh pays Aodh Óg, there, is his reference to him as 'fili ar fhilidhecht'. Tadhg mac Dáire, one of three Munster poets to reply to Aodh,⁴⁸ also pays him a similar compliment, placing him on an equal level with himself: 'ós aos dána sinn araon'.⁴⁹ Aodh Óg, therefore, like his half-brother, Maghnas, may have earned some reputation for versifying. (Poetry was in his blood: his mother Máire - mentioned in q. 52a of Fearghal Óg's poem - was a daughter of a Mac Con Midhe,⁵⁰ probably Solamh, Maoileachlainn or Brian Dorcha, all of whom were heads of this family of poets in the first half of the sixteenth century.⁵¹)

However, in his poem in the 'iomarbhágh', Aodh Óg makes it clear that, though he is at the end of his life, he would still prefer a different method of contention:

Truagh nach ar an nga do chleacht mé
ge tú-sa i n-earr m'aoise

44 Hill, 330; Anal. Hib. viii, 211.

45 See Walsh, The Ó Cléirigh family, 21.

46 Iomarbhágh XXVII and XV respectively.

47 BAR i, 52-54.

48 The other two are in Iomarbhágh XIX and XXVII.

49 Ibid., XVIII. 156b.

50 AU iii, 602; AFM v, 1504.

51 AFM v, 1292, ALC ii, 206; AFM v, 1364, ALC ii, 242; AFM v, 1466, ALC ii, 334.

réd rogha Muimhneach ón Máigh
a Thaidhg tarla ar n-iomarbháidh.⁵²

It is on his martial prowess that Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh concentrates in his eulogy mentioned above and Aodh Óg's reputation in this area seems to have been well-founded. For instance, in 1564 he successfully defended Donegal Castle against Conn Ó Domhnaill in an incident in which Conn was captured by Seaán Ó Néill.⁵³ In 1600 he was acclaimed for wounding Sir Henry Docwra in the forehead with a throw of his spear.⁵⁴

Fearghal Óg, in his elegy for Aodh Óg, with the benefit of hindsight, claims that Aodh was wronged by 'aicme Conaill' when they did not bestow the 'tighearnas' on him (qq. 1-5) though he had all the qualities necessary for the position (qq. 7-13). As we know that Aodh Óg was dissatisfied with the inauguration of his foster-son Aodh Ruadh in 1592, in preference to himself,⁵⁵ it is probably to this that our poet is referring. However, it would be wrong of us, I believe, to regard these sentiments as anything other than an opening gambit which allows the poet to give to Aodh Óg a 'caoineadh flatha' (q. 14b) though he never actually became a flaith. Thus the effect of his death is to be seen in the disturbance of the elements (qq. 19-23, 44-8) and in the condition of the people: those who have not been dispersed 'fa fhonn Eorpa' (q. 5d)⁵⁶ have been forced to submit and to

52 Iomarbhágh XV. 19.

53 AFM v, 1598; see Poem IV.70c n.

54 BAR i, 262; AFM vi, 2208.

55 BAR i, 40, 52-4; AFM vi, 1928.

56 Aodh Óg, in his poem (Iomarbhágh XV. 74), refers to the flight: 'An tan dob aois do Chríost ceart/ sé céad míle agus seacht/ do díbreadh síol gCuinn tar muir/ 's do beanadh dhíobh a ndúthaigh'.

give up the struggle, as though a 'ceas naoidhean' (q. 43c) were on them. Thus what he is lamenting is the departure of 'glún deireanach gaisgidh Gaoidheal' (q. 35a). This is likened to the effect which the deaths of other great warriors had on the people who were left without them, in particular 'Aichill mac Péil' (qq. 40-43), a comparison which Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh also makes in his eulogy.

Certain details in this poem encourage one in the view that, to some extent, it constitutes a reprise of matters dealt with in Poem IX, Fearghal Óg's lament for Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh. In the Introduction to that poem I have noted that the two compositions share the motif of tnúth. Another element common to both is that of the death of gaisgeadh. In Poem IX it was implied that this situation was not irreversible. That was before Kinsale and before the flight.⁵⁷ In 'Ní tráth aithreachais' the options are stark: either depart 'fa fhonn Eorpa' or stay and submit. The legitimacy of detecting a thematic relationship between these poems is further supported by Fearghal Óg's references to his lack of faith in his fellow Connallaigh: compare 'Ni hiontaobhtha aicme Conaill' ('Ní tráth' q. 3a) with 'lucht ar n-eóil ní hiontaoibh linn' (Poem IX. 10c).

It may not be an exaggeration to see behind Fearghal Óg's subsequent departure for the continent, his dissatisfaction with the turn which events had taken in Ireland, just as much as his failure to secure patronage and property. However his thinking in this regard was now to undergo a change. Although his circumstances were to become further reduced, when he

57 Cf. also Poem XI.34 n.

looked back at what had befallen him at home, exiled from his beloved Tír Chonaill, he was ultimately to implicitly exonerate his countrymen from all blame by attributing his immediate misfortunes to the oppression of the English, and his general decline to his own neglect of matters spiritual.

(viii) Louvain

There can be few aspects of the study of Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird to which greater uncertainty is attached than the last years of his life. Some time after 1618 he made his way to Louvain in Spanish Flanders. We know this from at least three poems composed by him there, the terminus a quo being provided by the elegy on Aodh Óg mac Aodha Dhuibh Í Dhomhnaill discussed in the preceding chapter. This location of Louvain provides a circumstantial link with some of Fearghal Óg's seventeenth century poems as it was to accommodate the friars who had been forced to quit Donegal Abbey in 1601¹ that Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire founded a Franciscan house of studies in Louvain in 1606.² It was at Louvain that the sisters Nuala and Mairghréag - mentioned in Fearghal Óg's poem beginning 'Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag' - were to find their last resting place³ as was Róis,⁴ daughter of Seaán Óg Ó Dochartaigh whose elegy, as we have seen, was composed by Fearghal Óg in 1601. A thematic link is also present in that the downfall of the Gaoidhil is an important feature underlying most of our poet's post-1600 compositions and this is continued in his Louvain poems, albeit on a more reduced level as the poet's own predicament becomes his prime concern.

Two of these poems are addressed to Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire who had been made Archbishop of Tuam in 1609.⁵ There is nothing in these poems to suggest

1 See Fearghal Óg's lament for this discussed above.

2 Jennings, The Irish Franciscan College of St Anthony at Louvain, 7.

3 Ibid., 11.

4 See transcription of grave-slab inscription in The historical works of ... Nicholas French i, p. lx.

5 Ó Cléirigh, Aodh Mac Aingil, 36.

that Flaithrí was not present at Louvain when the poems were composed. The fact that at least two poems are involved implies, possibly, that the situation recorded there obtained over a period of some time. Now while Ó Maoil Chonaire was a frequent visitor to Louvain, especially after 1618,⁶ he only came to live there permanently in November 1622.⁷ He remained there until October 1626 when he left for Madrid where he was to die on 18 November 1629.⁸ It is therefore possible that these addresses by Fearghal Óg to Flaithrí may date from the years 1622-6.

In the poem beginning 'Éisd rem éagnach, a fhir ghráidh'⁹ Fearghal Óg explains his case to the airdeasbag (qq. 6b, 22a). He has come to Louvain (q. 5c) having lost all his land and possessions in Ireland (q. 3) and having experienced the consequent 'fás síos' (q. 4a). It is not, however, the Irish, through their failure to patronise him, who have forced him into exile, but rather his persecution by the English:

A chara - ós dá chasaid ruibh -
Goill dom athchur 's dom arguin
rom thug go Labháin tar linn:
rug a hanáil óm intinn.

The poet's request is therefore simple: he asks the Archbishop to help restore to him some of his lost toice (qq. 2a, 7b) or ana (q. 25c). This is necessary so that he may return to Ireland once more ('ré ndul

6 Kerney Walsh, Destruction by peace, 107-8; Jennings, 'Florence Conry Archbishop of Tuam ...' in Galway Arch. Hist. Soc. Jn. xxiii (1948-9) (83-92) 84.

7 Jennings, Michael O Cleirigh, 28; O Donnell, Father John Colgan, 12.

8 Jennings, loc. cit. (n. 6), 84-5.

9 Di. D 90; Dán na mB. M 23.

dúinn go cathmhúr gCuinn' q. 8c); though he is down he hopes to rise again: 'súil re haithéirghe aguinn' (q. 7d).

Apart from this expressed intention of returning to Ireland, the main point of interest in this poem is the manner in which the poet addresses Flaithrí. He asks him to do his best for him ('déana dhamhsa do dhúthrocht' q. 23d) on the strength of two things: Flaithrí's learning and noble ancestry (q. 10bc). It is on the second of these that emphasis is placed. First we have four quatrains mentioning the noble personages in Ó Maoil Chonaire's distant genealogy (qq. 11-14). Then Fearghal Óg turns to an incident in Flaithrí's more recent ancestry: the time when Clann an Bhaird helped the Archbishop's grandfather, Muirgheas mac Pháidín, assert his position among his own people (qq. 15-19). (I have already dealt with this in the second chapter above.) It is on the strength of this 'ceangal síor' (q. 20c), 'móid ghráidh' (q. 21c) and 'báidh' (qq. 22d, 23b) between the two learned families that the poet now believes that Flaithrí should help him. All this suggests to me that Fearghal Óg was by no means on intimate terms with the Archbishop before coming to Louvain and it is possible that he may never have even met him before that time.

A similar impression is created by Fearghal Óg's other poem to Ó Maoil Chonaire. This begins 'Fuaras iongnadh, a fhir chumainn',¹⁰ and here it is the poet's short-term needs - as opposed to his long-term plans for returning to Ireland - which concern him. He finds, on coming to 'cúirt Labháin' (q. 13a) that he is not accorded the honour due to one of his status, rather are those of the lower orders,

10 IBP 6; Dán na mB. M 24.

also exiled there from Ireland, accorded wealth and honour while he is left destitute (qq. 1-3). He has left in Ireland what remained of his fortune (q. 6a) and he therefore now asks the Archbishop (q. 16b) to do his best for him against these 'clanna ladrann' (q. 12b):

Re foluibh ísli Fhuinn Luighdheach
dár las um chorp crithir thnúidh,
a mhic Fíthil ó iadh Énna,
grian do dhíchil déna dhúin.

A cheinnbhile chathrach Tuama
tuig cheana nach cubhaidh rinn
gan bheith i ngoire d'fhuil uasail,
cuir ó chroidhe suasuin sinn. (qq. 4-5)

Clearly Fearghal Óg was treated like any other refugee and given accommodation with the commonalty: 'ar comhroinn thoir a-tá mé' (q. 13b).¹¹

It is not easy for us now to imagine the shock which this must have been to a poet who, at the height of his career, would have commanded one of the coveted positions at his patron's table and shared his bed. This shock he renders, with characteristic understatement, as *iongnadh*, and juxtaposes the perversion of the social hierarchy with the paragon of decorum and courtly behaviour, King Arthur. That king would not eat his food until he beheld a new wonder and he would not fast for long if the poet were to

11 One of the reasons why Fearghal Óg's predicament went unrelieved must surely have been the dire poverty in which the friars themselves lived in the Irish college during these years. Cf. Jennings, *The Irish Franciscan College*, 27; Mac Giolla Chomhaill, *Braithrín Bocht ó Dhúin*, 33-4; *Seanchas Ard Mhacha* xi (1985) 269 n. 22.

recount his tale of woe to him.¹²

As in the case of 'Éisd rem éagnach', the message here is also simple and, if we were to take the two poems together, one possible reading of 'Fuaras iongnadh' might be that the poet is telling Flaithrí that if he cannot help him return to Ireland then the least he can do is to improve his lot in Louvain. In making such a reading, our attention is again drawn to the manner in which the Archbishop is addressed and his favour courted: not on the grounds of any personal friendship but rather through again reminding him of his artistic forebears. First the memory of his father is invoked: 'Nír bheag let athair mar iongnadh/ gan m'ana ag fás' (q. 7ab). Then Flaithrí is reminded once more of the connection between his family and Clann an Bhaird:

Atá seanbháidh ag slait Thuama
risin ttreibh ó ttáinig sinn,
má tá sin a mbun na báidhe,
do dhligh cur a láimhe linn. (q. 14)

The connection with 'Éisd rem éagnach' is further underlined by the verbal correspondence between line c in the quatrain just quoted and q. 22d of that poem ('an i mbun na báidhisi').

The reason that I emphasise the obvious distance, in the terms of friendship, between the poet

12 This taboo of King Arthur's is most familiar to us from the beginning of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and, though overlooked by Ó Caithnín in his Apalóga, it is mentioned in Marcher lords II.25 (this being derived from the Grail legend, see notes to same) and in quatrain fourteen of the seventeenth century poem beginning 'Triath na nGaidheal Giolla Easbuig', SGS iii (1929-31) 144 (for the relation between this and Céilidhe Iosgaide Léithe see Celtica iii (1956) 238-40).

and the Archbishop is that Dr McGrath has suggested that another poem, possibly addressed to Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire, is also by our poet. This begins 'Th'aire, a chumhthaigh, réd chomhrádh',¹³ and is anonymous in the manuscripts. It is addressed to 'mac Fíthil' (q. 3b) and this fact, in combination with other references,¹⁴ supports O Rahilly¹⁵ and McGrath in proposing Ó Maoil Chonaire as the subject addressed.

The theme of the poem is that the author has heard that mac Fíthil has cast aspersions on his poetic ability (qq. 3-4) and he warns him to beware of causing a dispute between them. He defends his reputation (qq. 6-7) and claims that his slanderer has drunk a 'deoch dearmaid' (q. 5). This anticipates the penultimate and, from our point of view, the most important quatrain:

Lucht éanbhoithe sinn re seal
ná tréig choidhche, a chruth áilghean,
t'fhear grádha mar nach dú dhaoibh:
cára ná tú dom thathaoir. (q. 9)

If this poem was composed by Fearghal Óg then the reference to the author and Flaithrí having shared the same both (i.e. at the school of poetry) comes as a surprise in the light of the manner in which our poet addressed the Archbishop in the two poems already examined. This I believe to be sufficient reason to seriously call into question McGrath's proposed identification of the author, which proposal in turn leads him to claim, as though the matter were beyond doubt, that Ó Maoil Chonaire was 'ar aon scoil dána le

13 Dán na mB. M 25.

14 Cf. 'a measg thuatadh' (q. 4b), 'a athuir na héigsi' (q. 5b).

15 RIA Catg., 23.

Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird'.¹⁶

Another poem, the authorship of which is in doubt, is that beginning 'Fogus furtacht don tír thuaidh'.¹⁷ Primary copies of this poem occur in four manuscripts. The two earliest of these were written in the Low Countries in the first half of the seventeenth century: the Book of the O Conor Don, ff. 197v - 199r and Brussels MS 1631-3, ff. 20r - 21v. In both of these it is ascribed to Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird. The other two are NLI MS G 167, pp. 289-92 and RIA MS 24 P 27, pp. 80-84. These two manuscripts are related (see Poem IV, Introduction, below) and both ascribe the poem to Eoghan Ruadh mac Uilliam Óig Mheic an Bhaird.

The poem is addressed to Aodh son of Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill. He left Ireland with his father in September 1607, being then scarcely one year old, was reared in Louvain, and died in action in Spain in 1642, never having returned to Ireland.¹⁸ However, this poem anticipates such a return - Aodh leading a cabhlach (q. 7b) - through which Éire will be relieved of her oppression, the prophecies will be fulfilled, and all of Nature will display anticipation of his new rule (qq. 1-11).

Aodh is the last representative ('fuigheal áir' q. 15d) of Clann Dálaigh, who have vanished 'mar cheo do mhuigh' (q. 13b), and, if God permits, he will inherit all that was promised to them (qq. 12-15). Though envy destroyed everyone before him it will not bring him down (qq. 16-19). His youth is no obstacle:

16 Dán na mB. M ii, 156.

17 Di. D 93; DER 20.

18 B. Jennings, 'The career of Hugh, son of Rory O Donnell, Earl of Tirconnel, in the Low Countries, 1607-1642' in Studies xxx (1941) 219-34. He is mentioned in quatrain 11 of 'Mo chean don loingsi tar lear', BAR ii, 120.

Conn Céadchathach, Conaire Mór and Fionn all began young and were successful (qq. 20-27). Aodh will therefore dispel Éire's grief, rebuilding her as Priam rebuilt Troy (28-38). He will therefore certainly cross over - all of nature beckons him - and he will repossess what his family once owned and will restore everything and everybody to their rightful place (qq. 40-47). His noble ancestry supports him in this endeavour: he is descended from both Gaoidhil and, through his mother Bridget FitzGerald, from 'na Goill as sine i gclár Chuinn' (qq. 48-52).

Quatrain 39 is of great interest:

A-táid na toirthe a-tá an úr
mar tá gach foichne 's gach fád
's an ghaoth ghuithbhinn dár súr siar
triall tar sruithlinn dúnn i ndán.

Here the poet expresses a desire to accompany Aodh to Ireland. We have seen that in quatrain 8 of 'Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh' Fearghal Óg expressed his intention of returning to Ireland once fortune smiled on him again. This quatrain could therefore be interpreted as supporting the ascriptions to Fearghal Óg, the poet possibly turning to another source of assistance having failed to gain the favour of the Archbishop of Tuam. Another aspect of the poem which supports this ascription is the theme of tnúth (q. 16a; tnú(i)dh qq. 17d, 18d, formad q. 17a, éad q. 19d) in quatrains 16-19. We have seen that this constitutes an important feature of our poet's seventeenth century compositions and its presence in this poem may therefore be significant.

Aodh is twice referred to as 'an tIarla óg' (qq. 2c, 19d) and once as 'Ó Domhnaill' (q. 30b). Following his father's death in 1608 he was constantly

referred to as 'the young Earl', in correspondence, by Ó Néill, the Archduke Albert and by Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire.¹⁹ It was Ó Maoil Chonaire who was the architect of the proposed plan for Aodh's invasion of Ireland in the second half of the 1620s which was one of the reasons for the Archbishop's leaving Louvain for Madrid in 1626 and which plan fell through as the expected hostilities between Spain and England did not materialize.²⁰ This provides us with a rough date for the composition of the poem, a date which would not rule out Fearghal Óg's authorship if the suggested date of his two poems to Flaithrí be correct.

In favour of Eoghan Ruadh's authorship one may cite his attachment to Aodh mac Rudhraighe as displayed in his poem celebrating his birth, beginning 'Cia ré bhfáiltigh fian Éirne'²¹ and in his acknowledgement of a letter received from him in c. 1614, a poem beginning 'Ionmhuin sgríbhíonn sgaoiltéar sunn'.²² That this affection was of a lasting kind is evident from complimentary quatrains to Aodh in poems addressed by Eoghan Ruadh to Niall Garbh and his son Neachtainn, both imprisoned in London. One of these expresses sentiments similar to those of 'Fogus furtacht':

Ar n-aon bhráighe Aodh Ó Domhnaill
dóchas Banbha ó aird go haird
a bhfuair de thoil rob tuar ratha
ná raibh do shluagh Macha mairg.²³

19 See Kerney Walsh, Destruction by peace, 93, 137, 234, 256, 273.

20 Jennings, art. cit. (n. 18 supra), 231-2.

21 DER 2.

22 Ibid. 1; ISP, 26. On this poem, and on that beginning 'A leabhráin ainmnighthea d'Aodh' (IBP 1) see Professor Ó Madagáin's remarks in Éigse xiv (1972) 250-51.

23 DER 5.23.

The second is still more interesting:

Nár tháire - ná táire mé -
 Aodh Ó Domhnaill i ndaoirse
 nár chluineam i láimh re a linn
 ar bhfuigheall áir dá fhoirinn.²⁴

Here in the final line we have a verbal echo of quatrain 15d of 'Fogus furtacht': 'nár thoirne uainn m'fhuigheal áir'. This may be taken as evidence supporting the ascription to Eoghan Ruadh.

The problem regarding the authorship of 'Fogus furtacht don tír thuaidh' is one which I have found impossible to resolve. It would be convenient to include it in Fearghal Óg's corpus but, viewed objectively, the question must remain open.

24 Di. D 63.30; DER 9.30.

(ix) Religious Verse

Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird was the author of fifteen devotional poems. Three other compositions of his might also be classified as devotional but seem to me to belong to an intermediate category, between the poet's secular and religious work; these I mention further on.

Of the fifteen poems, three are clearly relatively early compositions: Poems I and IA, edited below, and the poem which begins 'Ná déana díomas a dhuine'.¹ Three others are not ascribed to Fearghal Óg in the manuscripts but are included, by me, in his corpus on the strength of the closing quatrain dedicated to St Peter in each. These consist of a poem on the Cross, a poem on the necessity to reject the Devil as a master and to serve God exclusively, and a poem illustrative of the virtues and blessings accruing to those who devote their conversations to matters spiritual. On these see chapter (x).

The remaining nine poems can be considered as a unit for a number of reasons. Copies of all but one of them are exclusive to ff. 83r-92r of the Book of the O Conor Don. The exception is the poem beginning 'Díomhaoín gach dán acht dán Dé'² of which multiple copies - all incomplete - are to be found in manuscripts of the nineteenth century. In seven of these poems we find quatrains dealing specifically with or addressed to Mary. These quatrains range from two to four in number and are always used to finish the poem, preceding the dedicatory quatrain to St Peter. The two poems which do not include these

1 See chapter (iii) above and the Introduction to Poems I, IA. For 'Ná déana díomas' see also chapter (x).

2 Aith. D 90.

quatrains are the poem beginning 'Mé ar t'fhaosamh a ógh'³ - which is addressed to Mary, seeking her intercession - and that beginning 'Ní rí fíre acht flaith nimhe'⁴ the brevity of which (six quatrains) does not admit of this closing feature.

It is also possible to discern a thematic unity between these poems. The need for man to repent of his sins is a constant element and this is frequently juxtaposed with the great sacrifice which Christ made in suffering the Passion so that man might be saved. This is often accompanied by mention of the Harrowing of Hell. Thus in the poem beginning 'Maig nach diongnadh dán do Dhia'⁵ Fearghal Óg says that he should journey with a poem to Christ in expiation of His suffering and in celebration of the great creach He took from Hell (qq. 4-16). In 'Iomdha fáth ag feirg an Choimhdheadh'⁶ the sins of Lucifer, Adam and Eve, Cain, Noah (depicted as offending God through his excessive taste for good wine⁷) and Pharaoh and the ingratitude of man in general are contrasted with Christ's love as manifested in His Passion and in the Harrowing (qq. 17-25). Again, in the poem beginning 'Maig nach doirteann a dhéara' (see Introduction to Poems I, IA) the poet asks for the gift of tears that he may lament Christ's Passion, the tears which he should weep corresponding to the drops of blood which Christ shed on his behalf (qq. 14-22).

This theme of repentance necessarily

3 Ibid. 54.

4 Di. D 47.

5 Ibid. 38. Ó Dúshláine, in An Eoraip agus litríocht na Gaeilge 1600-1650, 118, has remarked that in this poem the poet is 'Ag tabhairt droim láimhe le gairm fhile an fhlatha'. One can only surmise that he has not understood the poem as there is no mention of this in it.

6 Di. D 31.

7 Cf. Genesis 9:20-22.

involves an eschatological perspective and a corollary of this, therefore, is the need to reject all material wealth and honour and to reflect on the transitory nature of life. This gives rise to a didactic element in the poems, with an Everyman-figure being addressed directly as 'a fhir' or 'a dhuine'. This we find in 'Ná déana díomas a dhuine' (as already noted in chapter (iii)) and a variation of it occurs in the poem beginning 'Ní díol grádha gleann na ndeor',⁸ where the buried corpse is addressed and the contrast between his present state and his former wealthy circumstances is emphasised (qq. 4-6) in a manner reminiscent of the Alexander apologue in Poem IV of the present collection. This Everyman theme is most fully developed in the poem beginning 'Dlighe a dhuine déanamh lóin',⁹ where it constitutes the opening section (qq. 1-9) of that poem. Related to this is the ultimate decision facing man: the choice between God and the Devil. This is the theme of one of the three poems mentioned above which are not ascribed to Fearghal Óg - that beginning 'Deacair foghnámh do thoil dá thighearna',¹⁰ - and it is also the theme of one of the nine poems under discussion here, that beginning 'Mairg bheireas díogha dá dheoin'.¹¹

Of the three poems which constitute the intermediate category, two have already been discussed in earlier chapters: the poem beginning 'Slán uaim ag oiléan Pádraig' in chapter (iii) and that beginning 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin' in chapter (v). The third begins 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir',¹² and I include it in this category because of the references

8 Di. D 45.

9 Ibid. 20.

10 Aith. D 76.

11 Di. D 35.

12 Di. D 46.

contained in it to the poet's personal circumstances. It is, however, very closely connected to the nine poems which were taken as a unit above. It occurs along with them in the Book of the O Conor Don (ff. 83r-85r) and this is the only copy of it which is extant. It includes a number of themes present in the other poems - the Passion (qq. 43-5), the rejection of all worldly princes in favour of God (q. 40)¹³ as in 'Ní rí fíre acht flaith nimhe', and the concomitant idea that all things come from God (qq. 46-53) which is also found in 'Mairg nach diongnadh dán do Dhia' (qq. 17-21). We also have here the closing quatrains to Mary (qq. 54-7) which, as noted above, were a feature of seven of the nine poems.

It may therefore be that these nine devotional poems, together with 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir', because of the close correspondences between them, all belong to the same period of our poet's career. Now the only poem of this group, the circumstances of the composition of which are known to us, is 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir', as Fearghal Óg explains in quatrain 5 of that poem:

Ar ionnarbadh ó iath Ír
nír altoighios rem Airdrígh
mo thriall go Labháin tar linn
dom anáir thiar ar dtóirling.

The poem was thus composed in Louvain (cf. also q. 29) while Fearghal Óg was 'ar ionnarbadh'¹⁴ there and

13 Note also 'ceo gach triath acht triath na ndúl' in line c. here and compare this with 'ná tréig an Coimhdhe ar ceo' in q. 10b of 'Ní díol grádha gleann na ndeor'.

14 (Mac Cionnaith needlessly emends to 'Ar n-ionnarbadh'.) This agrees with the poet's statement to Ó Maoil Chonaire in q. 5 of 'Eisd rém éagnach a fhir ghráidh' that the reason for his coming to Louvain was 'Goill dom athchur 's dom arguin' (see chapter (viii)).

therefore belongs to his latter years. It does not seem unreasonable, then, to conclude that the other nine religious poems also belong to this period.

One possible interpretation of this prolificity in the matter of religious verse while in Louvain might be that the poet was in receipt of some form of patronage from the Franciscans there, or that he may have joined the order and that the recurring theme of contempt of the world reflects this change. The fact remains, however, that we are not yet in a position to say what became of Fearghal Óg as it is in Louvain that we lose sight of him.

One tantalising area which may yet repay investigation is the identity of 'a ffryer called ffarrell oge McAwarde' who is mentioned as giving word of the forthcoming rebellion to Bryan McGuire in October 1641.¹⁵ McGrath¹⁶ has identified him with Marianus a Sancto Francisco Vardeus who appears in Franciscan records as praeses of the college in Louvain for the years 1633-5.¹⁷ It seems that he was taken from Bundrowes to Louvain in 1631¹⁸ but that by 1639 he was back in Tír Chonaill as guardian of the convent of Donegal.¹⁹ In 1642 he was hanged from the mast of a ship in the Shannon and the sources are divided equally in describing him as either Marianus or Fergallus Juvenis.²⁰ While the occurrence of the quatrains to Mary in our poet's religious verse, probably composed in Louvain, and the emergence of a

15 UJA n.s. iii (1896-7) 212.

16 Ó Brien (ed.) Measgra Mhichíl Uí Chléirigh 110.

17 Jennings (ed.) Louvain papers, 101, 102, 104, 106, 116, 122.

18 Jennings, Michael O Cleirigh, 115-6. The first mention of him being at Louvain is 1632, see Collectanea Hibernica xii (1969) 16. The latest reference seems to be to the year 1636, see Anal. Hib. vi (1934) 228-9.

19 Giblin (ed.), Liber Lovaniensis, 358.

20 Sources cited by McGrath, loc. cit. n. 15. See also Millett, The Irish Franciscans, 540.

Father Marianus there in the 1630s is an appealing coincidence, it must be said that our poet would have been at least ninety-two years of age in 1642 and that McGrath (loc. cit.) may therefore be correct in further equating Marianus with Hugh Ward's brother who studied at Salamanca and entered the university of Louvain in 1617²¹ and whose name, before taking holy orders, was Ferdinandus.²²

I have not attempted here anything other than a very brief survey of Fearghal Óg's religious work. This is an area requiring a special study which could not be accommodated within a General Introduction of this nature. Nevertheless, it would be doing an injustice to the poet if I did not discuss what, to my mind, is his finest poem. This is the poem beginning 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir' which, as I have already mentioned, was composed in Louvain sometime towards the end of Fearghal Óg's life. This is his most personal poem and, like Ó Bruadair and Ó Raithile after him, it is the product of an attempt to come to terms with the despair he feels when faced with the trauma of being overwhelmed by circumstances over which he himself has no control. If 'Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh', 'Fuarus iongnadh a fhir chumainn' and, possibly, 'Fogus furtacht don tír thuaidh' are appeals to others for help, 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir' represents the poet's effort at resolving matters for himself.

The basic idea behind the poem is that the poet, in retrospect, feels that he should be equally grateful to God for whatever honour he once received and for the loss of that honour.²³ Job 1:21 - 'ó

21 O'Brien (ed.), op. cit., 77.

22 Cf. a frater Ferdinandus Vardeus mentioned in 1619: Jennings, *Louvain papers*, 66.

23 For the suggestion that 'Turnamh dóchais díoth muirne' contains the germ for this idea see chapter (vi) above.

thoil te/ Dia tug Dia rug a-ríse' (q. 10ab)²⁴ - provides Fearghal Óg with a motto which enables him to regard with equal resignation and passivity the respect and prosperity which he once commanded and the disrespect and poverty which is his present lot. It also provides him with the basis for the antithetical structure of the fifteen quatrains (qq. 24-38) which follow the Job-uirsgéal. These fall into four groups of 3, 3, 6 and 3 respectively and each group is identified by the repetition of a phrase in its constituent quatrains. It is best to begin here as it is in this central section of the poem that the poet itemizes what he has lost.

Quatrains 24-6 each begin with the line 'Eadamar is is dom fhéa(s)gain': just like Job it was to test him that he lost his race (na Conuill) (q. 24), his cattle and horses (q. 25); his land, his poet's raiment, and his craft itself (q. 26) were taken away from him. In quatrains 27-9 he desires to give thanks to God - 'Go n-altaighior a rí ribh' - for the loss of his wealth and his own people (muinntear) (q. 27), for the English occupation of Ireland (q. 28) and for the lack of respect for him and his art in Louvain (q. 29):

Go n-altaighior a rí ribh
mé gan fiú an bhaire do bhuidhin
i Labháin fa cheó cumhadh
ní beó anáir m'ealadhan.

In the six quatrains (qq. 30-35), each of which begins 'Ionann is altaighthe dhamh' ('dhúinn' qq. 33-5), the relevance of Job 1:21 is clearly seen

²⁴ Mac Cionnaith reads 'ó thoil Dé' which is incorrect and destroys the alliteration.

as Fearghal Óg contrasts his present misfortune with his previous prosperity, claiming that he should be equally grateful for both. These juxtapositions may be summarized as follows: reward/ refusal, pre-eminence/ subservience (q. 30); prosperity/ indigence, health/ sickness (q. 31); wearing a king's clothes²⁵/ wearing servants' clothes (q. 32); sleeping in a soft bed/ sleeping in an iron bed or having no bed at all²⁶ (q. 33); leading a settled life amidst his prosperity/ wandering destitute (q. 34); dwelling among friends/ dwelling among enemies (q. 35).

The irony and muted bitterness which these verses reveal are accompanied by a genuine effort to reach some manner of resolution to these difficulties. The progression in Fearghal Óg's thinking is signalled by the progression from Eadamar to Go n-altaighior to is altaighthe. That is, from acceptance of his lot as being the work of God, to a desire to be grateful for this, to an admission that all things good and bad occur through God's agency and equal thanks should be given to Him for this.

From this position it is not a great distance to the stoic sentiments of quatrains 36-8, in which the oppositions are continued but this time under the rubric 'Ní fáth faoilte, ní fáth bróin'.²⁷ Thus Fearghal Óg views with equanimity an eminent family²⁸ and clothes of gold as opposed to being homeless, deprived of children and prosperity²⁹ (q.

25 See Poem III.9cd n. below.

26 'nó bheith i liommhuir gan luing' (q. 33c), a pun on long meaning 'ship' and 'bed' (cf. DIL L, 200.14-18).

27 The first line of qq. 36 and 37, the third line of q. 38.

28 clann oirdhearc q. 36b, a direct echo of the Job-uirsgéal q. 7a.

29 gan chloimn gan chonách q. 36d; see n. 13 in chapter (iii) above.

36); feasting in a splendid court as opposed to being without property in a bare dwelling and afflicted with a great thirst (iomad tarta) (q. 37). The third quatrain of this unit brings this central section of the poem to its remarkable conclusion:

Cré gach colann san chruinne
breith nó oighidh éanduine
ní fáth faoilte, ní fáth bróin
ní caointe cách i gcéadóir. (q. 38)

From the catalogue of losses and injuries which Fearghal Óg enumerates here, it is clear how the legend of Job would have readily suggested itself as a precise parallel to the poet's experience and, therefore as an eminently appropriate apologue for this poem. Apart from the structural use made of Job 1:21, a further testimony to Fearghal Óg's genius is the way in which the uirsgéal itself is presented and in the selectivity employed in shaping a coherent and apposite unit out of the diverse traditions regarding Job which were current in medieval Europe.³⁰ For this reason it is worthy of special attention.

The first point that must be made is that the biblical Book of Job is only partly the source for this uirsgéal.³¹ It represents - in common with most other occurrences of the story in medieval literature - a fusion of elements drawn from biblical, apocryphal and exegetical traditions.³² It has long been recognised that co-existent with the biblical Job

30 For traditions concerning Job from Irish folklore see S. Ó Súilleabháin, 'Etiological stories in Ireland' in Mandel and Rosenberg (eds), Medieval literature and folklore studies, (257-74) 260.

31 Pace Ó Caithnia, Apalóga na bhfilí, 137.

32 A good exposition of these traditions will be found in Besserman, The legend of Job in the Middle Ages, 3ff.

story - in which Job is represented as a somewhat rebellious person, angry with God for the apparent injustice of his sufferings - is an alternative tradition which depicts Job as the epitome of patience, whose faith in God enables him to face all his misfortunes with resignation and humility. Brief references to Job's patience and righteousness in Ezekiel 14:14, 19-20 and in the epistle of James 5:11 constitute the only biblical authority for this, and in the early fifth century A.D., Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia, accused the biblical author of gravely misrepresenting Job who was not the rebellious character depicted in the Book of Job but rather one who governed his life with great wisdom and piety.³³

For the first three quatrains of the apologue (qq. 6-8) Fearghal Óg summarily follows the biblical account, briefly referring to Job's great wealth and to his obedience to God (Job 1:1-5).³⁴ In quatrain 9, however, he makes a marked departure from both the biblical text and from medieval tradition in that he attributes Job's misfortune solely to Jesus' desire to test the endurance of His servant:

Do smuain Íosa dá éis soin
fulang a óglaoich d'fhéachain
an uile ní badh ní lais
do bhí uile 'na éagmhais.

³³ Stevenson, *The poem of Job*, 78.

³⁴ The only element here which is not strictly biblical is q. 8c 'nír ghrádhaigh sé an saoghal bochd' which is probably a reference to the apocryphal tradition of Job's great generosity to the poor. This tradition appears in the fifth (?) century Testament of Job, for a summary of which see Brown and Foote (eds) *Early English and Norse studies*, 79-82. That this tradition was known in Ireland is clear from PH 6031-3.

In the Book of Job and in every vernacular version of the Job legend in medieval literature which I have examined, it is always Satan who is the prime mover of the disasters which befall Job. Here, however, any mention of the devil would be extraneous to the purpose of the poem as it would represent an impediment to the personal relationship which the poet wishes to affirm between himself and God.

The significance of Íosa is dealt with below but the allusion to Job as Christ's óglaoch is hardly fortuitous. References are found in patristic writings to Job as an athlete or a wrestler who overcomes Satan in combat.³⁵ But it is specifically in the Psychomachia of the fourth century Spanish barrister Aurelius Clemens Prudentius that Job is depicted as a battle-scarred warrior, the companion of Prudentia, who oversomes Ira in battle.³⁶ This, then, is the ultimate exegetical basis for Fearghal Óg's reference.

Quatrain 10 mentions Job's loss of his children and of his prosperity (cf. Fearghal Óg's corresponding loss, *supra*) and contains the quotation from Job 1:21.³⁷ Quatrain 11 brings the list of Job's misfortunes to a close with the 'tuile easláinte',³⁸

35 See Lewalski, Milton's brief epic, 22-4.

36 Thomson, Prudentius i, 291. The idea of the miles Christi and of the holy war in general was particularly topical during Fearghal Óg's era as political and religious causes merged in Ireland in the wake of the Reformation; e.g. cf. Topic xiii (1967) 26; Historical Studies viii (1971) 150; Carney, The Irish bardic poet, 31; Ó Buachalla, 'Na Stíobhartóigh', 105.

37 Compare this account from a Middle English poem (Brown and Foote (eds), *op. cit.*, 91.64-8): 'Than cam a mesanger and tolde this fatal desteny/ Of the pytevouse distruction of his children all./ But ever Iob, with pacience and hole memory,/ Lokyng upp to hevyn to the high Fader celestially, And said, "God gave, God takyth. Yt is His naturall".'

38 In medieval times Job's 'easláinte' - described in Job 2:7 as 'running sores from head to foot' - was identified with

imposed on him by God, and in quatrain 12 Job gives thanks for his new affliction.

The next two quatrains are remarkable for their depiction of Job's wife. In the Bible she is represented merely as a shrew who scolds Job for his faith in God (Job 2:9-10), and it is this figure of a nagging wife, acting as a foil to Job's faith, that is predominant among medieval commentators and exegetes.³⁹ Fearghal Óg's account is as follows:

Do bhíodh do dhalta an Dúilimh
gur chneasaigh a chréachtchrúinimh
ag súr dhéirce ó bhrugh do bhrugh
a shéitche ar cúl na comhladh.⁴⁰

Do haltaigheadh re Dia ndil
's ris an óigh mhilis mhuirigh
tabhairt coda déirce dhi
nó a shéitche d'oba impi. (qq. 13-14)

The earliest reference to Job's wife being forced by her reduced circumstances to rely on the charity of others occurs not in the Vulgate but in the Septuagint. Here she retains her shrewish character but her role is developed and while railing against Job for his frustrating patience says:

leprosy and later with syphilis: see Brody, *The disease of the soul*, 56. Raiftearaí twice refers to 'loibhre Ióib': see Ó Coigligh, Raiftearaí 39.31, 40.23.

39 Gregory the Great refers to her as 'that mispersuading woman', *Morals on the Book of Job* i, 155.

40 ar cúl na comhladh means 'behind the door' and, viewed from the aspect of the person who opens the door, this is in fact quite accurate: cf. O Hara line 3962 n. Bergin (IBP, p. 41) misread this quatrain, seeing it as referring to Job as the alms-seeker rather than to his wife, and this error was repeated by Ó Concheanainn in *Eigse* xv (1973-4) 248.

and thou thyself sittest among the
putrefaction of worms ... while I am
wandering about, or working for wages,
from place to place and from house to
house, wishing for the setting sun that I
may rest from the labours and sorrows I
endure.⁴¹

The absence of an unfavourable depiction of Job's wife places Fearghal Óg's version in a somewhat unique position in medieval tradition as complimentary references to her are scarce indeed.⁴²

In quatrains 15-16 we encounter another aspect of the Job legend which again has structural and thematic relevance for the rest of the poem. Fearghal Óg says that Job did not bemoan his loss of wealth and children or his sickness, rather he lamented Christ's crucifixion (q. 15cd) out of love for the Trinity (q. 16d). This is a good example of a commonplace feature of medieval literature and iconography, namely the prefiguration of New Testament characters and events by characters and events from the Old Testament.⁴³ The outstanding exegetical example of Job as the prefiguration of Christ occurs in Gregory the Great's Moralia:

For there never was any saint who did not
appear as His herald in figure ... And
therefore it behoved that blessed Job

41 Cit. Besserman, op. cit., 38.

42 Besserman, *ibid.*, 171 n. 42 cites the fifteenth century Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry as a rare example, but even there Job's wife's patience eventually fails her: 'And but as his wiff with the releef of that that pepill gave unto her, she susteyned his lyff in moche tribulacion and anguisshe of pouerte wherethorough that upon a tyme she waxe inpaciens and wrathe, by temptation of the fende ...' (EETS (1906) 103).

43 See Auerbach, Scenes from the drama of European literature, 11-76, especially 28-44. See also Poem XII.36a n. below.

also, who uttered those high mysteries of His incarnation, should by his life be a sign of Him, whom by voice he proclaimed, and by all that he underwent should shew forth what were to be his sufferings.⁴⁴

Apart from its immediate relevance to Fearghal Óg's treatment of the Job legend, the element of prefiguration - which has been signalled earlier through the mention of Íosa in quatrain 9a⁴⁵ and by the allusion to the Virgin Mary in q. 14b - anticipates the third section of the poem (see below) where the poet seeks to resolve his difficulties through meditation on the Passion of Christ.

The account, in quatrains 17-20, of the restoration to Job of his health, his property and his family, accords in the main with the biblical account (Job 42:9-17) save that it is coloured by what appears to be Fearghal Óg's own interpretation of the biblical events, an interpretation based on Job 1:21 (q. 18cd). The final quatrain of the apologue runs as follows:

Fós mar éaruic 'na fhulang
an ghlóir naomhtha neamhchumhang
fuair ó thriath an tighe thuas
fa sgiath dá chridhe a choguas. (q. 21)

The only suggestion in the Bible of the possibility of Job being rewarded in the afterlife is Job 19:25-7, the passage beginning 'But in my heart I know that my vindicator lives'. This is open to many interpretations and it is best to quote Besserman on

44 Morals on the Book of Job i, 26.

45 It could also be that this (q. 9a) is simply a case of the interchangeability of Christ and God in medieval Irish literature; see Poem XII.36a n. and McNamara (ed.), Biblical studies, 53.

the subject:

In the Middle Ages ... Job's faith in a personal redeemer and his belief in an afterlife in which all the world's injustices will be righted were considered to be his primary response to righteous suffering - even though the presence of these motifs in the biblical text is dubious at best.⁴⁶

Thus, for instance, in the apocryphal vision or apocalypse of St Paul⁴⁷ Job is plainly seen to be enjoying his reward in heaven: 'For I am Job who suffered much through thirty years from the suppuration of a wound ... for I know that the trials of this world are nothing in comparison to the consolation that comes afterwards'.⁴⁸ The prefiguration motif and this eschatological element are neatly combined in the following extract - a development of Job 19:25-7 - from a homily in the Leabhar Breac:

Is e mo chretium, ar Iob, co mba beo mo
thathcrithid Ísu Crist isin esergi, 7 co
n-éirus fen imalle fria cách i mór-dáil
lai brátha.⁴⁹

I have already discussed the direct application of the uirsgéal to Fearghal Óg's material circumstances in Louvain as outlined by him in

46 Op. cit., 27.

47 For Irish fragments of this see references in McNamara, The Apocrypha in the Irish Church, 105-10.

48 Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha ii, 793.

49 PH 3442-4.

quatrains 24-38 (to which quatrains 22-3 serve as an introduction). The emphasis placed on the restoration to Job of his good fortune might suggest that, despite the despondent tone of the poem, the poet still may have entertained hopes of some improvement in his affairs, as he clearly did in 'Éisd rem éagnach a fhir ghráidh'. However the eschatological turn which the poem takes from quatrain 39 onwards indicates that his faith in a heavenly reward is far greater.

This third section of the poem takes its cue from the representation, in the apologue, of Job as a type of Christ. In quatrains 39-49 the poet maintains that no king should be mourned save 'rí an ríthighe' (q. 39d). He then considers how all the elements, in their own way, mourned for Christ on Good Friday (qq. 41-5). Observing that this is quite natural as God created all things in heaven and on earth (qq. 46-9), he proceeds to contemplate all the gifts with which God has endowed us (qq. 50-53). Thus from meditating on the death of Christ, the poet returns to a reappraisal of his own lot and these four quatrains reveal a less dissatisfied Fearghal Óg, seemingly content to await his reward in heaven while biding his time in this life by counting his blessings. They are also indebted to the apologue in that they represent the poet's thanksgiving for his anáir in accordance with the example of Job. We should note also that the repetition of the phrase 'uaidh fuaramar' in each of these four quatrains establishes a structural link with the second part of the poem. Unfortunately this may not be entirely obvious to the reader as the editor has somehow mangled the text of quatrains 52 and 53 as well as that of quatrain 54. The following, therefore, is the manuscript text of these quatrains:

- 52 Uaidh fuaramar foirfe an searc
 a dhealbh féin gá fearr toirbheart
 uaidh fuaramar a bhfuair sinn
 uaidh fuaramar a bhfuighiom
- 53 Uaidh fós fuaramar inn féin
 do rala sinn ar saibhchéill
 gur ghabh sin caomhchorp dár ccionn
 naomhthacht ar nach bfuil foirceann
- 54 Dár mbreith gus an bflaith bhfire
 ré iúil na sé seinlíne
 do thoirrling san óigh iodhain
 coimhling dán cóir creidiomhain.

This quatrain, quatrain 54, is the first of the customary closing quatrains to Mary and these end with quatrain 57.

In chapter (vii) above I have rejected Professor Breatnach's suggestion that the poem beginning 'Truagh liom Máire agus Mairghréag' (composed, I suggest, c. 1608) contains Fearghal Óg's 'parting shot'. If we wish to look for a final statement from our poet perhaps it is to be found in the final quatrain proper (preceding the dedicatory quatrain to St Peter) of 'Ní maith altuighim'. Unfortunately Fr Mac Cionnaith thought it necessary to severely emend this quatrain, to such an extent that the printed text, in so far as sense can be made of it, gives a meaning which is the exact opposite of the manuscript text. Here, then, is the correct text:

58 Tríd do fhág**h**as inis Bhreagh:
 Bóinn do dhiúltadh mhac Míleadh;
 flaith d'íbh ArtOilill ní h-áil;
 nī maith altoighim m'onáir. NI

MS a dfág**h**bais; d monóir.

Because of that I left the island of
 Breagha: the Bóinn refusing the sons of Míl;
 she does not desire a prince of the
 descendants of Art and Oilill;⁵⁰ not well do
 I give thanks for my honour.

Here, in the midst of his personal crisis, Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird reflects on the general state of Ireland and laments the fact that the sons of Míl are no longer in possession of their own country.⁵¹ The poet's ionnarbadh (q. 5a) reflects, in microcosm, the exile of all the Irish.

50 ArtOilill is a dvandva compound, see Poem XII.16b n. below.

51 This has already been anticipated by quatrain 28.

(x) Poems by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird

Sixty poems, which can definitely be attributed to Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, survive today.¹ Even when the vagaries of Irish manuscript tradition and transmission are taken into account, such a quantity, I believe, is an eloquent testimony to the high esteem in which his work was held by those scholars whose duty it was to record compositions of this nature. In more recent times, Bergin remarked that 'many of Fearghal Óg's poems have a natural grace and charm beyond the miracles of technique admired and imitated in the schools',² and a perusal of the poems now edited here will, I hope, support that opinion. Miss Knott considered our poet to be 'a voluminous composer of simple, if not very distinguished verse'.³ If by 'simple' is meant the clarity of argument and exposition discernable in his work, one cannot disagree, except to enter the caveat that Fearghal Óg was well capable of producing a type of high-flown esoterism if he so wished - DMU I and IV are cases in point - but this is the exception rather than the rule. As regards his work being 'not very distinguished', I can only say, though unfamiliar with the criteria applied by Miss Knott, that compositions of such excellence as 'Ní maith altuighim m'anáir' and Poem IV in the present collection, to name but two, surely give the lie to this observation. For my own part, it has been an onerous and humbling experience to attempt to do justice to the work of such a master.

It is a moot point whether or not one should seek for clues as to the personality of the author in

1 See Appendix VI.

2 IBP, p. 118.

3 ISP, 82.

the compositions of a medieval poet. For what it is worth, however, a reading of his poetry produces a sketch of Fearghal Óg which conforms to the general picture we have today of the archetypal bardic poet: proud, independent and sometimes petulant. Humorous glimpses of him breaching professional and personal etiquette are provided respectively by Ó Gnímh in 'Cuimseach sin a Fhearghail Óig',⁴ where he is accused of composing verse in the open air (and on horse-back!) in contravention of all bardic precedent, and by the anonymous author of 'Cia h-ainm a-tá ar Fhearghal Óg' (edited here as Appendix I) who indicts him for allegedly paying too much attention to that poet's woman. His poems of appeasement to Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir and Brian (na Múrtha?) Ó Ruairc depict him as being possessed of a stubbornness and intolerance not uncommon in poets of his status,⁵ which characteristics were to have serious consequences in the matter of his relationship with Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill (see above). That his perception of this status, and the honours and privileges due to it, remained unchanged up to the closing years of his life is evident from his poems addressed to Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire in Louvain.

This edition consists of thirteen poems which span at least thirty years of the career of Fearghal Óg. These I have attempted to arrange in a tentative chronological order.⁶ I have coupled two short, devotional pieces together as Poems I and IA. In subject-matter the remainder are divided, in broad

4 IBP 27.

5 Cf. Breatnach, 'The chief's poet', 39-40. Cf., also, Poem VII here.

6 In retrospect, I now feel that Poem VII may be earlier than Poems V and VI.

terms, between elegies (Poems II, IV, IX, X and XI) and eulogies (Poems III, V, VI, VII, VIII and XII), though naturally, as areas of interest, intention and emphasis shift from poem to poem, there is considerable variety within these general categories.

Two of these poems – Poems VI and X – are not ascribed to our poet in the manuscripts (Poem X has no ascription). I attribute them here to Fearghal Óg on the grounds that both contain a final, dedicatory quatrain to St Peter. Dedicatory quatrains to saints are commonplace in bardic verse.⁷ Of the sixty poems mentioned above, thirty-nine contain a complimentary quatrain to St Peter. Among these thirty-nine I include the two poems mentioned above, as well as three others not ascribed to Fearghal Óg. These three are religious compositions.

The poem beginning 'Deacair foghnámh do thoil dá thighearna',⁸ occurs in seven manuscripts, with a fragment in an eighth. It is ascribed to Mathghamhain Ó hUiginn in one, to Ó hEodhusa in another, and the remainder bear no ascription. Its final quatrain reads:

Peadar apstal i n-aghaidh gach ainbhfine
fascadh an ghlainbhile as cabhair dar gcomhdhaine
m'éarlámh saor dar slóigheadh neamhdhaidhe
mo ghealmhuine craobh gcnoígheal gcubhraidhe.

Copies of 'Naomhtha an obair iomrádh Dé',⁹ exist in thirty-two manuscripts (with fragments in three further

7 E.g., Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe; Brighid (Mac CM XIII. 81, XIX. 29, XXI. 41); Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh: Mícheál (e.g. Di. D 64.37, 67.52, 74.73, 99.44); Ádhamh Ó Fialán: Athracht (Magauran XIX. 57, XXIV. 55, cf. XXXII. 40); Irial Ó hUiginn: Eoin Baisde (O Hara XII. 21, XV. 20); etc.

8 Aith. D 76.

9 Ibid. 75.

manuscripts). It is ascribed to Mathghamhain Ó hUiginn in five, to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh in three, to Ó Dála (Fionn) in two, to Mathghamhain Ó hIfearnáin in one and to Mochuda in one, the remainder being anonymous. The final quatrain of this poem reads:

Aighneas m'anma ar iocht Peadair
lór damh do dhíon m'airteagail
fa chúis éarca guine an gha
réallta na n-uile eagna.

The poem beginning 'Sbéacláir na cruinne an chroch naomh',¹⁰ is to be found in eleven manuscript copies. The earliest of these¹¹ bears no ascription and the remainder are ascribed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, but all of these derive ultimately from a copy made by Mícheál mac Pheadair Uí Longáin.¹² In this case the final quatrain reads:

Peadar comharba an Choimhdheadh
bíodh leam an seang séaghainngheal
fa chréachtcháir na gcroidhe thall
sbéacláir oile ní iarrfam.

What supports me in my reckoning of these poems among Fearghal Óg's corpus is a poem beginning 'Ná déana díomas a dhuine'.¹³ Eighteen copies of this poem survive. Seven ascribe it to Ó Dálaigh Fionn, three to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, one to Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, one to Colmán and five are anonymous. All of

10 Di. D 45.

11 The Book of the O Conor Don, f. 66r.

12 Maynooth MS M 56 (C), p. 249.

13 Di. D 43. I have already mentioned this poem above in the context of my treatment of Fearghal Óg's early years.

these seventeen copies just mentioned contain twelve quatrains with the final quatrain reading:

Féach orm a dhoirseóir Dé athar
a hucht Críost ler ceannchadh sinn
ná léig im cheann cíogh an álaídh
i ngeall re gníomh Ádhaimh inn.

The eighteenth copy, and the earliest, is found in N Lib. Scot. MS 72.2.14, f. 27v. This copy contains only eleven quatrains, the dedicatory quatrain to St Peter being absent. However, its ascription reads 'Ferghall Og .cc.' and it is immediately followed by what is now Poem IA in the present collection which bears the heading: 'An fear cna .i. Fergall Og Mac an Bhaird .cc.'

The sixty poems in Fearghal Óg's corpus have an average length of approximately thirty-three quatrains.

Thirteen consist of fifty or more quatrains and seven of these are edited here for the first time. These include his longest, second longest and fourth longest compositions: Poems IV, V and XII respectively.¹⁴

These sixty poems comprise a total of 1,959.5 quatrains¹⁵ of which 554 (just over a quarter¹⁶) are edited here.

Metres All of Fearghal Óg's poems were composed in dán díreach.¹⁷ The metrical situation can be outlined as

14 His third longest poem is 'Teasda Éire san Easbáinn' which has sixty-nine quatrains.

15 The '.5' derives from 'Uaibhreach mise ar Mhág Uidhir' (DMU V) of which only 17.5 quatrains now survive due to a chasm in the manuscript.

16 Precisely 28.2725%.

17 A number of the additional, dedicatory quatrains are in brúilingeacht of the metres involved: see Ó Concheanainn, in Éigse xv (1973-4) 240, who sees, in this, possible 'echoes of popular or sub-literary elegiac verse'.

follows:

<u>Metre</u>	<u>Number of poems</u>
Deibhidhe	39
Séadna Mór	8
Rannaigheacht Mhór	5
Rannaigheacht Bheag	4
Droighneach	2
Leathrannaigheacht Mhór	1
Snéadbhairdne	1

It will be clear, from these figures, that poems in deibhidhe constitute 65% of the total number of poems, a figure in keeping with the findings of Professor Ó Cuív, from an examination of other collections, as presented by him in Éigse xii (1967-8) 276-7. The metrical data relating to the thirteen poems, now edited here, reflect this general pattern, as it were, in microcosm.

<u>Poem</u>	<u>Metre</u>
I	Deibhidhe
IA	Rannaigheacht Bheag
II	Deibhidhe
III	Deibhidhe
IV	Deibhidhe
V	Deibhidhe
VI	Rannaigheacht Mhór
VII	Snéadbhairdne
VIII	Séadna Mór
IX	Deibhidhe
X	Deibhidhe
XI	Deibhidhe
XII	Deibhidhe

Here deibhidhe is approximately 69% of the total.

Language The data given here relate to the present collection and are confined to prepositions (conjugated and in combination with other particles where such forms are of interest) and to verbal forms (excluding 'regular' verbs).

PREPOSITIONS¹⁸

A Sg. 3 m. as IV. 18d.
f. eisde VI. 6b.

With possessives: Sg. and Pl. 3 as a IV. 26a, IX. 45c.

Ag Sg. 1 agam I. 3d, VI. 5d, VII line 30.
2 agat IV. 38b.
agad IV. 45b.
3 m. aige IV. 32a, VII line 111.
Pl. 1 againn IX. 58d, XI. 24d, XII. 29d.
2 agaibh VIII. 6c.
3 aca IV. 50b, V. 1c, 10c, 50c, X. 21b,
42a.

With possessives: Sg. 1 'gam VI. 6a
Sg. and Pl. 3 'ga VI. 4a, V. 12d; aga
VII line 10; agá VII line 65.

With article: Sg. 'gan V. 42b.

18 Variations in unstressed syllables not noted. For forms with copula see under VERBS.

- Ar** Sg. 1 orom IV. 3d, VI. 3a (-sa), VII. 2a, VIII. 50d.
orm VII. 1c.
 2 ort IV. 50c, 51a, 52a, 60b, V. 73c, 75c, 77c, VII. 20a.
 3 m. air II. 25c, IV. 33c, 79c, VI. 4d (-sion), VII lines 30, 108 (-siomh), VIII. 25d, 29d, 37d, 49d, IX. 27b, 28c, 54b, X. 26d (-séin), 50d (-séin), XII. 34c, 46c.
 f. uir(r)thi III. 13b, 15a, VIII. 22c, IX. 43d, XI. 3d, XII. 55b.
uirre III. 14d, V. 55b, VII lines 2, 3, 5.
 Pl. 1 oroinn IV. 4a, 13c, 72d, VII. 30a, line 113, X. 55d, XII. 59b.
oirn IA. 4d, IV. 1c (-ne), 13a (-ne), V. 44c (-ne), VI. 16d.
 2 oraibh IV. 49a, 58a.
 3 orthaibh IV. 2c.
or(r)tha II. 3c, V. 20d, 56d, IX. 47c.
orra II. 4d, IV. 53b, V. 28c, VIII. 35d, XII. 54d.

- ***De** Sg. 3 m. de I. 2a, II. 26c, VII line 88, VIII. 23d.
 f. dí IX. 12bc.
 Pl. 1 dínn VI. 6d, IX. 7b.
 2 díbh VIII. 4c.
 3 díbh II. 13d (-séin), III. 5d, IV. 31b (-séin), V. 9b (-sean), 14d, VI. 12b, XII. 11b (-séin), 12a.
díobh II. 14a, IV. 34b, V. 15a, 17b, 18b, 19a, 63b, VII line 12, VIII. 35c, X. 30d, XI. 11c.

With possessives: Sg. 1 dom I. 1a, VII. 13c.

Pl. 1 dár VI. 11b, VII. 6d.

Sg. and Pl. 3 dá III. 2c, IV. 41d,
52d, VI. 16a, VIII. 5b, 38c, IX.
44b, XI. 27b, XII. 9d, 47a.

With article: Sg. don II. 19d, V. 25d, 32c, IX. 18d.

Pl. do na IV. 33b.

With relative particle: Present dá III. 1c, 3a, VIII.
25b, 34c, XI. 15a,
XII. 38d, 45c, 58a.

Past dár XII. 36c.

With aⁿ 'all that': dá VIII. 50b.

Do Sg. 1 damh II. 31a (-sa), III. 11c, IV. 73a,
74a, 81c, VI. 8d, VII lines 85, 100, VIII.
50b.

2 duit IV. 44c, 65a, VII. 19c.

deit V. 65d. deid I. 1d.

3 m. do II. 25b, 28b, VII. 3b, IX. 34c, X.
16a, 21a, 33a, XII. 33b.

dó II. 32c, III. 7b, IV. 7c, 41c, VI.
7b, VII. 10d, 18c (-san), line 66,
VIII. 5d, X. 5a, 11acd, XI. 40c, XII.
9b, 13a.

f. di III. 16c, IV. 81c, XI. 3c, XII. 8a.

dí III. 13c, XI. 28c.

Pl. 1 duinn III. 13d, 16d (-ne), IV. 14c, 36c,
54c (-ne), V. 21a, VI. 16b, 21b, VII. 1d
(-ne), 17c, XI. 10b, XII. 50d.

dúnn VI. 3d, IX. 19c.

2 daoibh VIII. 1b.

3 dóibh IA. 4a, II. 14d, III. 6a, IV. 23a, 26b, V. 38a, 39c, VII line 55, IX. 37a, XII. 31c. dáibh V. 9d, X. 7c, XII. 58d.

With possessives: Sg. 1 dom VII. 11b.

2 dod IV. 49b.

Sg. and Pl. 3 dá II. 5d, 9d, 17c, 31a, IV. 4a, 18b, 25b, VIII. 2c, X. 11a, 18a, XI. 20b, 25d, 49b.

With article: Sg. don II. 28d, 33d, IV. 15c, 59d.

With relative particle: Present dá VIII. 41a, XII. 47c.

Past dár IV. 42c, VIII. 37b.

Fa Sg. 3 m. faoi V. 60a, IX. 25a, 40c.

Pl. 3 fúthuibh II. 15b.

With possessives: Sg. 2 fád IV. 37b.

3 fá III. 14c, VI. 20c, X. 19c.

fa a VI. 18a, 19a, 20a.

With article: fán IV. 31a, 52c, 54b, 62d, V. 13a, 77a, VII. 26c, VIII. 29d, IX. 18c, 52c, XI. 31d.

bhán XI. 9b.

With relative particle: Present fá VIII. 22b, X. 25c, XI. 12c.

Past fár IV. 8a, V. 6a, IX. 42c, XI. 55a.

Go With article: gus an X. 17c.

I Sg. 3 m. ann III. 3b (-séin), IV. 11a, 16b,
VIII. 32d, IX. 35c, 52c, XII. 17a, 18c,
36a (-séin).
f. innnte II. 24d, 28b, VII line 62, IX.
16d, X. 18a, 45d.

With possessives: Sg. 1 im IV. 67a, VII line 53 (am).
2 id V. 68c.
it IV. 37c, VII. 19d.
3 'na IV. 31d, 33a, VIII. 20a,
48c, X. 32b, XI. 2d, 44a, 52c,
XII. 29d.
i(o)na X. 1d, XII. 26b, 48c.
Pl. 1 ionar IV. 13d.

With article: Sg. san II. 10c, 21b, 22d, IV. 17d, 19b,
42d, 63d, V. 57c, 62d, VIII. 17d,
32d, 33a, IX. 18c, 22c, 32c, XI.
31b, 34c, 40a, XII. 37c, 56d. sa VII
line 96 (see vll. II. 10c, XI. 34c).
Pl. sna IV. 13b. isna VIII. 18c.

With relative particle: Present i IV. 15c.
ina VII line 64.
'na X. 24c.

Idir, Eidir Pl. 1 eadruinn VII. 4a.
3 eatorra V. 51d, 53b, X. 25d, 31a,
XI. 40d.

With article: 'mun IX. 11d.

With aⁿ in phrase 'ma gcuairt V. 8b.

- Le** Sg. 1 liom III. 7d, 8b, 9ab, IV. 21a, 79b, VI. 2c, 15c, VII. 11a (-sa), lines 13, 87, XI. 20a.
leam III. 8d, IV. 30c, 75d, VI. 4c, 11b, VII line 9, VIII. 28d, X. 55a.
 2 leat IV. 72a, XI. 23a.
 3 m. leis IV. 41b, VII. 26c, line 77, VIII. 37a, XII. 52c.
lais II. 26a.
 Pl. 1 linn IA. 2a, IV. 13c (-ne), 15b, 20c, 38c, IX. 10c, 58a, X. 2a, XI. 53c.
leann IX. 51a, XI. 39a.
 2 libh IV. 38a, 61c, 69a, VIII. 1d, 2d.
 3 leó V. 22a, 25b, 41c, VII line 6, IX. 46c, 53c, X. 7b.

With possessives: Sg. 1 lem IV. 78d.

3 le a VII line 3, VIII. 7c.

With article: Pl. leis na XI. 38b.

With relative particle: Present lé I. 4a, IV. 34ad, V. 12c, 21c, 47c, VIII. 4c, 49b.
 Past lé(a)r II. 32d, V. 7c, 14d, 27c, IX. 31b, XI. 20d, 21a, XII. 9c, 56c, 60d.

6 Sg. 1 uaim III. 1b, 2d (-se), VI. 6c, VII. 8c,

- line 47, VIII. 30d.
uam VI. 1d, 5a, 7d.
 2 uaid IV. 66d, 77d, VII line 98.
 3 m. uaidh III. 10d, 11b, IV. 23d, 24d, 70d,
 V. 15a, 16a, VI. 6d, 17a, VIII. 27c,
 28a, X. 48c, XII. 14d.
uadh IV. 69c, VII. 11c, IX. 19a, 30d.
uaidhe IV. 15d.
uadha III. 7c, V. 17b, 38c.
 f. uaithe IV. 18b, VII line 8.
 Pl. 1 uainn IV. 1a, 3a, 37c, 43c (-ne), 48b, 80d
 (-ne).
 2 uaibh IV. 62d, 64c, XI. 55d.
 3 uathaibh IV. 58c, V. 46c, IX. 42d, XII.
 32a.
uatha IV. 76a.
uadha V. 8d.

With possessives: Sg. 2 ód VII. 21b.

With article: Sg. ón II. 28c, IV. 8a, V. 46a, X. 31c,
 XI. 13c, 40b, XII. 52c.

With relative particle: Present ó II. 21a, VI. 19d, X.
 51c.

Past ór IV. 81b, X. 24b, 49a,
 XII. 34d.

- Re** Sg. 1 riom IA. 3d, VI. 14b.
 2 riot V. 66a.
 3 m. ris V. 20a, VII lines 34, 35, 40, VIII.
 6a (-sion), IX. 40c, XII. 38c.
 Pl. 1 rinn IA. 1d, IV. 14a.
ruinn IV. 49c.

2 ribh IV. 35c.

3 rú IV. 11c. riú IV. 12a, 46a, V. 51a.

With possessives: Sg. 1 rem I. 3b, IA. 3c.

2 red IA. 4c, V. 74c.

ret IV. 36d.

3 re a VII line 4 (for le), XI.
50c, XII. 15b.

ré VI. 21b, X. 23c.

With article: Sg. ris an II. 8a, VII line 89, XII. 53d.

With gach: ris gach V. 64b.

With relative particle: Present ré VII. 9c (for lé),
VIII. 35a.

Past réar II. 25d,

Past negative ris nár VI. 18b.

Ré Sg. 1 róm VII. 31c, VIII. 33b.

2 ród IV. 52b.

3 m. roimhe II. 13a, V. 18c, 40c, 64c, VII
line 13, XI. 23a.

reimhe IV. 10c, 14a.

f. reimpe XII. 56d.

Pl. 1 romhainn V. 7d, X. 6d, XI. 38b.

róinn IX. 44c.

2 romhaibh IV. 77c, V. 65c.

3 reampa XII. 36c.

Tar Sg. 3 m. tairis XII. 38d.

thairis VII line 65 (simple prep.).

Pl. 2 taraibh IV. 36c.

Tre With relative particle: Past trér IX. 57c.

With aⁿ 'all that': tre a XI. 37b.

Um, Im Sg. 3 m. ime XI. 13b.

f. impe XII. 8d.

With possessives: Sg. 3 ma a V.61a.

má VIII.18b.

uma XI.4a.

VERBS

Copula

Present Indicative

	<u>is</u> passim.
Negative:	<u>ní</u> passim.
Dependant:	<u>gurab</u> V. 35a; <u>gor</u> VII line 42.
Negative dependant:	<u>nach</u> IX. 53d.
With conjunctions:	<u>más</u> ^L IV. 30a, V. 37c, VII. line 27.
	<u>ó's</u> IV. 36c, VIII. 31c,
	<u>ósa</u> VI. 11b.
With interrogative:	<u>an</u> VII lines 93, 97.
	<u>nach</u> IV. 25c, 48a, VIII. 48c, 49d.
Relative:	<u>is</u> ^L III. 10c, IV. 36c, 45a, V. 32c, 35a, VIII. 31c, XI. 10b, et

- passim.
- Negative relative: nach III. 4a, 9c, IV. 54c,
V. 58a, VII. 24d, XI.
6a, 41c.
- Preposition with relative: dán V. 4d; dárb VI. 22d;
dár X. 35a.
lén VIII. 21c.
ón IV. 48c.
rén X. 52d, 54b.
- Relative with possessive: 'sa VI. 7c (sg. 3 f.).

Past Indicative

- ba XII. 12c, 32c.
budh^L V. 31a, XI. 27a.
fa II. 31cd, 32d, 37b, IV. 7d, VI.
16b, VII. 33d, VIII. 33c, IX.
41a, XI. 50d.
dob^L II. 28c, 33d, IV. 30d, 50d,
V. 3c, 17d, 18a, 39c, VII.
2c, XI. 18b, 52d, 53c, XII.
30d, 58d.
- Negative: ní(o)r^L II. 13d, 17b, 18a, 20d,
IV. 22d, 26b, 31c, 76a,
V. 65c, VI. 14b, VII.
18c, IX. 19c, 24c, 28a,
XII. 31d.
- ní(o)rbh^L V. 47d, 48c, VII lines
2, 6, X. 35c, XII. 9c,
10a, 11a, 12a, 60c.
- Dependant: gor VII line 25.
gorbh^L VII lines 22, 43.
- Negative dependant: nár^L IV. 22a.

- With conjunctions: gé(a)r^L II. 16a, 30a, 34b, VII.
1d, VIII. 11a, X. 21a,
30d.
gé(a)rbh II. 29c, X. 31a.
gurbh IV. 77d, X. 32a.
- With interrogative: nár^L IV. 59d.
- Negative relative: nár^L IV. 22a, VIII. 32c, X. 14d,
XII. 59c.
nárbh IV. 69c, V. 41d, X. 42c.
- Preposition with
relative: dár II. 35b, V. 14b, VIII. 1d, 2d,
IX. 55d, X. 43d.

Future

- bu XII. 52c.
budh IV. 20d, 38d, VII. 17a, VIII.
28d, X. 5d.
- Negative: ní budh VI. 7b.
- Relative: bhus VIII. 18d, XII. 49c.
- Negative relative: nach ba IV. 45c.

Secondary Future

- do budh II. 9a, IV. 16d, IX. 53c.
- Negative: níor^L II. 8b.
- With preposition: gur^L VI. 4d.
- Preposition with
relative: dár II. 8c.
fárbh VI. 17a.
rér V. 16d.

Present Subjunctive

- dob IX. 52b.
 Dependant: go madh VII line 89.
 With conjunctions: madh IV. 3a.
gi(o)dh IA. 4b, IV. 6a, 11a, 15b,
 19a, 38ac, 81c, VII lines
 9, 12, VIII. 30a (MS gé),
 X. 50c (MS gé), XII. 4a.
 Cf. gi bé II. 8c, VIII. 18b.

Past Subjunctive

- budh IV. 10c, VI. 22c.
dob XI. 50a.
do ba VII line 99 (cf. vll.).
 Dependant negative: nach budh II. 17a.
 With conjunction: dá madh II. 14d, 26a, X. 15c, 37a.

A-táPresent Indicative

- Sg. 1 a-tú XI. 23d.
-fuilim VII line 88.
-dú (after gá) IX. 47b.
 2 a-taoi IV. 37c.
 3 a-tá II. 29b, IV. 20c (mar), V. 28ac,
 VI. 9c (mar), 9d (má), VII lines
 44 (ó), 102 (mar), VIII. 2a, X.
 1c (gé), XI. 5a, 6b.
-fuil II. 4d, IV. 2c, 16b, V. 68c, VI.

19d, VII. 7c, VIII. 25b, IX. 1c,
 X. 42a, 50a, XI. 9a, 15a, 31c,
 43a, 45a, 47c, XII. 45c, 58a.
-foil III. 1c, IV. 5a, VII line 39,
 IX. 13d.

Relative: fhuil IX. 35c.

- Pl. 1 a-tám I. 3c, VII. 8a.
a-támuid IV. 14d, 15b (mar).
-tám (after gá) IV. 41c, V. 20a, IX.
 22a.
-támaid (after gá) XII. 38c.
 2 -fhuiltí IV. 1d, 40d.
 3 a-táid IX. 2a (mar), 30b, 32c, 39b
 (mar), XI. 12a, XII. 3c.
a-tád XI. 15c.

Consuetudinal Present

Sg. 3 -bí IV. 25a, 27c, 40c, VIII. 35c.

Past Indicative

- Sg. 2 do bhí tusa IV. 39b.
 3 do bhí II. 10c, 12a, 34b, IV. 12b,
 17c, 22a, 27d, 31b, 32c, 33b,
 V. 48a, VII lines 63, 65, VIII.
 34b, IX. 3b, 8bc, 9a, 10a, 11a,
 39b, 44a, 52d, X. 18a, 36d, XI.
 49a, XII. 45d, 46c.
do bhaoi II. 32c, X. 32d, XI. 42c,
 XII. 56d, 57d.
-raibhe VII lines 5, 109, X. 18b, 49b.
 Pl. 3 do bhádar IX. 2b, XI. 51a, XII. 34a.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 3 do bhíodh VIII. 10c, XII. 19a.
do bhíoth VIII. 10b, 20d.
-bíodh IV. 15c.

Pl. 3 do bhídís IX. 25a.

Future

Sg. 3 biaidh IV. 65c, 67a, IX. 5a, X. 1d,
 3c, XI. 21b, XII. 20c, 21cd,
 24cd, 29d, 48c.
-bia (MS biaidh) XII. 25bcd, 26b.

Pl. 1 -biam VII. 15b.
 3 beid VIII. 18a, XII. 22b (MS biaidh).
-biad (MS beidh) VIII. 3a.

Secondary Future

Sg. 3 do bhiadh II. 12c, V. 52b.

Present Subjunctive

Sg. 1 -rabhar IA. 2b.
 3 -raibh VII. 22c, XI. 20b.

Pl. 1 -beam VI. 15d.

Past Subjunctive

- Sg. 1 -beinn V. 27a.
 3 do bhiath V. 50b.
do bheith X. 3c.
-beith II. 12a, VI. 19b, VII. 4a,
 lines 30, 102, IX. 28a.
-beath V. 47a.
- Pl. 3 do bheidís¹⁹ IX. 53d.
-beidís II. 9b, V. 50b.

Imperative

- Sg. 2 bí IA. 2c, 4c.
 3 bíodh II. 17a, 36a.
bíoth V. 76c.
-bíodh IV. 5d.

Participle of necessity

beitte IV. 23a.

Verbal Noun

bheith II. *10c, 15b, 18a, IV. 79b, V. *7b,
 77a, VII. 33a, line 100, VIII. 16b,
 48a, IX. 16a, XI. *30c, *31a.

19 Possibly Secondary Future.

beith IV. 68c, IX. 55b, X. 19b, 33a, XI.
28c, 29a, XII. 52b.

(Forms marked * are not preceded by leniting particles.)

A-deir

Present Indicative

Sg. 1 adeirim VII line 49.
-abruim X. 35d.
3 a-deir II. 1a, V. 62a (mar).

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 -dubhairt mé V. 14a.
3 a-dubhairt VII lines 104, XII. 35a.
adubhairt seision VII line 109.
-dubhairt II. 33d, XI. 37b.

Passive -dubhradh V. 31a, XI. 39a.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 3 deireadh VII line 10 (mar).

Secondary Future

Sg. 1 a-déaruinn VII. 14b, line 31.

AingidhFuture

Sg. 3 relative aineócas VI. 22b n.

BeiridhPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 bheirim (sic) VII line 111.

Passive bearair VIII. 35d.

-bearair III. 12c.

-beirthior VIII. 4c.

Past Indicative

Sg. 2 rugais IV. 43d, 73c, 76a.

3 rug V. 62c, VIII. 36a, X. 7c, XI. 22c,
25b, 38d, 44c, XII. 37a.

Pl. 2 -rugabhar IV. 51d.

3 rugadair V. 20a.

Passive rugadh IX. 7b.

Imperfect Indicative

Pl. 1 do bheirmís IV. 13b.

Future

Sg. 3 relative bhéarus XII. 51b.

Secondary Future

Passive -béarthaoi V. 33c.

Imperative

Sg. 3 beireadh VIII. 5a.

Participle of necessity

beirthi VIII. 7c.

Verbal Noun

breith VI. 6b, VII lines 17, 25, VIII. 6a,
IX. 52a.

Do-bheirPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 -tabhraid VII line 86.

3 do-bheir IX. 13a.

do-bhir XI. 11d.

Past Indicative

- Sg. 1 -tugas III. 7a.
 2 tugais IV. 58d.
 3 tug II. 25b, V. 15a, 16a, 17b, 29b,
 75c, VIII. 8a, 16ab, 22c, IX. 16b,
 21b, 40c, 51a, X. 11a, 16a, 20c,
 36c, 37d, 39b, XI. 2b, 3a, 8c, 9b,
 52b, XII. 2a, 31b, 36b.
tug sé IV. 39c.
do-rad VIII. 32d, X. 11c.
-tug V. 32b, VII line 64, X. 35a, 38a,
 XI. 38c.

- Pl. 1 tugamar V. 45b.
 2 tug sibh IV. 42a.
-tug sibh VIII. 2c.

Passive tugadh IV. 41b, VIII. 24b.

Future

- Sg. 1 do-bhéar VI. 5a, VII. 10c, VIII. 31a.

Secondary Future

- Sg. -tiobhruinn III. 2a, VI. 8b.

Imperative

Sg. 2 tabhair I. 4c, IV. 3a.
 -tabhair III. 16d.

Verbal Noun

tabhairt VII lines 61, 77, 79, 80.

Do-chíPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 -faicim III. 3b.
 3 do-chí sé VIII. 21b.

Pl. 1 ad-chiam V. 55b.

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 -faca IV. 21cd.
 3 -facaídh VII. 16b.

Pl. 1 -facamuir III. 2b.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 1 do-chínn IV. 17b.

Pl. 1 do-chímís IV. 37b.

Future

Sg. 3 do-chífe XII. 13b.

Present Subjunctive

Pl. 1 -faiceam VI. 10b.

Past Subjunctive

Sg. 1 -faicinn III. 5b.

Pl. 3 -faicdís IX. 53b.

Verbal Noun

faicsin X. 32d.

Do-chluinPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 do-chluinim VII. 6c.

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 -cuala V. 18d, 38d.

3 -cuala IV. 5a.

-cualaidh XII. 11b.

Passive do-clos III. 14a.

-clas IV. 18c.

Do-gheibhPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 -foghaim V. 73c.

Passive do-gheabhthar IV. 30c.

-faghair IV. 34d.

-foghar V. 12c.

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 fuarus VIII. 33b.

fuair mé XI. 13a, XII. 6ac.

fuair misi I. 2c.

-fuair mé III. 4c, IV. 16c.

3 fuair II. 24d, 30b, V. 2a, 30a, VIII.
23c, X. 5b, 12ac, 34b, 48d, XI.
25d, 27b, XII. 9d.

uair IV. 79a, XII. 56a.

uair sé VIII. 15b.

-fuair VI. 13c, VIII. 34c, X. 2a, 4a,
XI. 40d.

Pl. 1 -fuaromar III. 14d.

3 fuaradar II. 7b.

fuair siadsan V. 29a.

Passive fríth VII line 60.

-fríoth X. 24c.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 1 -fuighinn VII. 33c.

3 do-gheibheadh II. 14b.

Future

Sg. 2 -foighbhe IV. 1d.

3 -fuighe III. 14c, VIII. 30b.

Passive -uighthear III. 3c.

Secondary Future

Sg. 1 do-ghéabhainn III. 11b.

Present Subjunctive

Sg. 1 -faghar VII. 21a.

Past Subjunctive

Passive -fuighthe VI. 12a.

Imperative

Sg. 3 faghadh IV. 48d.

Verbal Noun

fagháil I. 4d, V. 28b, 47b, X. 39d, XI. 26b.

fogháil V. 48d.

Do-ní

Present Indicative

Sg. 1 do-ním VI. 15b.

Pl. 3 do-niad X. 1b.

Passive -déantair VIII. 23d.
-déantar VIII. 35a.

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 -dearna mé I. 4a.
 3 do-rinne XI. 14d.
do-roinne VIII. 38c.
do-ríne IV. 57d, X. 28c.
-dearna VIII. 37d, XI. 22d.
-dearna sí VIII. 50b.

Pl. 2 -dearnobhair IV. 49b.
-dearna sibh VIII. 1b.
 3 do-rónsad X. 26a.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 3 do-níodh II. 23d.

Future

Sg. 1 do-ghéan VII. 24c.
 3 do-ghéana XII. 52a.

Past Subjunctive

Sg. 1 -dearnainn I. 2a.

Participle of necessity

déanta VII. 17c, X. 8c.

Verbal Noun

déanamh VII line 34.

déineamh V. 35d.

déinimh IV. 26b, VIII. 6d.

(gen. sg. déanta VII. 3a, line 84).

Do-roich (see also **Rig**)

Verbal Noun

rochtain XI. 26c.

Fágbhaidh

Past Indicative

Sg. 3 do fhágaibh IX. 4c.

-fhágaibh VII line 112, X. 22b, 45b.

Passive -fágbhadh V. 25b.

s-Preterite

Sg. 3 fágbhais X. 17a, 29d n., XI. 41a.

Future

Sg. 3 -fúigfe V. 59d.

Relative fhúigfeas IX. 31a.

Verbal Noun

fágbháil X. 15d.

Féachaidh

Past Indicative

Sg. 1 do fhéachus X. 3d.

3 do fhéag V. 44c.

-fhéag X. 22d.

-dhéach XII. 11b.

Past Subjunctive

Passive -féaghthaoi V. 33d.

Imperative

Sg. 2 féach IV. 2a.
féag IV. 53d.
-féach IV. 1c.

Verbal Noun

féachain VIII. 38a, IX. 54a, X. 19a.
féachadh XII. 55b.
sírdhéagain XII. 53b.

GabhaidhPresent Indicative

Sg. 1 gabhoimsi VI. 2d.

Past Indicative

Sg. 2 do ghabh tú IV. 70b.
do ghabh tusa IV. 71b.
 3 do ghabh VIII. 29b, XI. 23b, XII. 61a.
do gheabh II. 37d, IX. 13c, XI. 19a.
do ghabh sí XI. 1c.

-ghabh II. 6c, 27b, V. 64c, VIII. 14a,
IX. 45d, XI. 21a.
-gheabh IX. 57c, X. 30c.

Pl. 1 do ghabhomar XII. 59d.
-gabhamur XII. 60d.
2 do ghabhabhar IV. 74c.

s-Preterite

Sg. 3 gabhuis X. 16b.

Imperfect Indicative

Pl. 3 do ghabhdaois V. 24b.

Future

Sg. 1 -géabh VIII. 28a.
3 géabhaidh XII. 42c.

Imperative

Passive gabhair²⁰ VIII. 25d.

20 Possibly Present Indicative Passive.

Verbal Noun

gabháil XII. 3a.

IbhidhPast Indicative

Sg. 3 -ibh XII. 14c.

Imperfect Indicative

Passive do h-ibhthí IV. 19b.

Future

Sg. 3 íobhaidh VIII. 17b, XII. 14b.

Verbal Noun

ól VI. 17b, VII. 33c, VIII. 17d.

LamhaidhSecondary Future

Sg. 3 -léamhadh VIII. 38a.

LeigheasaidhFuture

Sg. 3 relative leigheósas XII. 48a.

Secondary Future

Passive -leigheósdaoi XII. 47a.

Verbal Noun

leigheas²¹ XII. 49a.

Mairidh, MaraidhPresent Indicative

Sg. 3 maraidh II. 1d, 2a, IV. 34c.

biothmharaidh II. 2c.

-mair IV. 8b.

-mairionn IV. 3b.

21 Cf. inleighis IV. 69c, ollamh re leigheas VII line 18.

Past Indicative

Sg. 3 do mhair II. 22a, XII. 46a.

Future

Sg. 3 méaruidh X. 2d.
mairfidh sé X. 3a.

Secondary Future

Sg. 3 -mairfeadh XI. 22b.

RigPast Indicative

Sg. 3 ráinig X. 31d.
-ráinig IX. 20c.

Tárr(th)aighidhPast Indicative

Sg. 3 tárthuigh X. 29a.
-tártaigh XI. 25c.

Passive tárras XII. 8a.

Téid

Present Indicative

Sg. 3 téid II. 36b, V. 34a, VI. 6d, VII
lines 36, 74, VIII. 25a, 26a,
46a, IX. 18c, X. 17b.
-téid VII. 11c.

Past Indicative

Sg. 3 do-chuaidh IV. 23c, 49a, 51c, V. 13c,
34b, 60b, VII line 38, IX.
37b, XI. 10c, 34c.
do-chóidh VII. 1c, VIII. 34d, IX. 43a,
XI. 39c.
-deachaidh IV. 55a, X. 51c.

Imperfect Indicative

Sg. 1 téighinn III. 10a.
3 téigheadh XII. 10b.

Future

Sg. 3 rachaidh VIII. 17d, XII. 42d.
 -ragha XI. 22d.

Pl. 3 rachoid XII. 49b.

Secondary Future

Sg. 3 -rachadh IV. 50b.

Pl. 3 do rachdaois VII line 53.

Verbal Noun

dol IV 54c, V. 38c, VI. 15a, VII. 17b, 30b,
 VIII. 6c, 20a, 47c.

dul IX. 10b, X. 4c, XII. 35c.

dola V. 72b (ionnola), IX. 58c.

dula III. 12b.

TigPresent Indicative

Sg. 3 tig V. 63b, X. 19a.
 tig sé X. 33b.

Pl. 3 tigid IV. 30b.

Past Indicative

- Sg. 3 táinig II. 16b, IX. 20d, X. 31c.
tánaig IX. 12bc, 18d, 23d, XII. 40d.
-táinig II. 21a, V. 11a, VII line 62.
-tánaig IV. 52d, XII. 38d.

Imperfect Indicative

- Pl. 3 tigdís IV. 26a.

Future

- Sg. 3 tiocfa VII. 13c, XII. 40a.
-tiocfa V. 11a.

- Pl. 3 tiocfaid XII. 23c.

Present Subjunctive

- Sg. 3 -tí IA. 2c, V. 33c, VI. 22c, XII. 25a,
 26a, 27a, 45a.

Past Subjunctive

- Sg. 3 tíosadh VII. 18b.

Verbal Noun

teacht IV. 9c, 36c, 58c, 71d, V. 53c, VII
line 6, X. 24b, 38d, XI. 16b, XII.
32d.

tocht XI. 35a, 50c, 52c, XII. 28c.

toigheacht IV. 39c, XII. 33b.

TuitidhPast Indicative

Sg. 3 do thuit II. 33b, IV. 23b, IX. 4d
(-sean), XII. 4c, 6a.

do rochair IX. 21d.

-thuit II. 34a, XI. 20d, XII. 7a.

Pl. 3 do thuitiodar XII. 5a.

do thuit siad V. 22a.

Verbal Noun

tuitim II. 32b, 34a, IX. 20d.

Editorial principles The Introduction to each poem edited below contains a section entitled 'Editorial remarks'. This section gives details of the manuscript sources for the poem in question. Although all sources are listed, only primary copies – that is, copies the exemplars of which do not survive or have not been identified – are taken into consideration in the preparation of an edition, and it is in this sense that the term 'copy' is to be understood in the following remarks.

Only single copies survive in the case of seven of the poems: Poems I, IA, III, VIII, IX, XI, XII. In the case of Poems II, VI and X, two copies survive of each. Three copies of Poem IV survive. In the case of Poems V and VII, several copies are in existence.

Where two or more copies of a given poem survive, the manuscript containing the greatest quantity of best readings, irrespective of date, has been selected as the basis for the edited text while the variant readings are provided from the other copy or copies in the accompanying apparatus. Where these other copies contain better readings than the base-copy, these are supplied in the text and the matter is discussed in the notes. It has been possible to select a base-copy in the case of all of the poems in question though the textual relationship between copies may remain problematic. Thus, in the case of Poem V it is possible to distinguish two manuscript families: a single copy and a group consisting of many copies. Using non-textual considerations it has been possible to construct a tentative stemma which confirms the division. As the copies in the second family are all quite close, the earliest copy has been selected to represent that family. However, the single copy in the first family

contains better readings than those in the second and so it is on that single copy that the edition is based with variants provided from the representative of the second family.

In the case of Poem VII it has again been possible to select a base-copy though it has not proved possible to discern a stemmatic relationship between the manuscripts. For this reason variant readings from all copies are given in the apparatus.

Three main categories of editorial intrusion in the manuscript text are outlined below under the headings of orthography, initial mutations, and layout of text. Changes which have been effected silently are all orthographical and are detailed in that section. All other changes are noted in the apparatus. Poem VII is slightly exceptional in that, being a crosántacht, it has a number of prose passages (now editorially divided into seventeen numbered paragraphs) interrupting the verse. These prose passages have necessitated the adoption of an editorial policy different from that applied to the verse. This policy is outlined in the Introduction to Poem VII. Note also that because of the number of copies consulted for that edition (see above) only the more important variant readings are given in the apparatus for reasons of space.

Emendations not included in the following categories - such as the substitution of permitted variants - are discussed in the textual notes.

ORTHOGRAPHY

The major area of editorial involvement here has been the juncture of homorganic consonants in compound

words. I have followed, with one exception, the teaching of the poets in this regard. In the examples cited below, *v* signifies a long vowel and is only included in cases where its presence is of significance.

-s t- (IGT i.33) cnuasdamhan VI.2a (cf. non-editorial áraisdigh X.53b).

-s s- (IGT i.37) guaiseabhaic V.6a, fraisneachta XII.11d.

-vn n- (IGT i.41) aoineach V.43d, X.42a, XII.47b.

-n d- (IGT i.41) ionnola V.72b, ceinnearg XII.10d.

-vn d- (IGT i.41) éanuine IV.24b, 78b, aonuine V.29c, 68c, mínearg VIII.8d, aonamh XI.19d, grianomhain XII.44c, buanoimhne XII.49c.
I have chosen to leave aoinDia (X.40a) unchanged.

-vl l- (IGT i.41) caoileabaidh IX.34c.

-mh m- (IGT i.42) comaith V.11b, 18c, comaidheamh V.29b, caomuighi VIII.42c, caoimillsi IX.48c, comuaidhreadh XI.7a.

-mh b- (IGT i.42) neiminn V.58a, neamáidhe XI.25b.

-m b- (IGT i.43) diomuaidh IV.37d, VIII.34d.

-vr r- (IGT i.44) géireann V.49c, VIII.24d, IX.7d, XII.8c, 20c.

-c g- (IGT i.25, 46) breaclais V.36c.

-g g- (IGT i.46) óigil VI.21d. Cf. non-editorial géigeal X.14c.

-gh g- (cf. IGT i.146) ríoguala III.7d; lígeal VIII.5c, 27a, IX.28d.

-dh d- (cf. IGT i.138) cruadoirche X.32b.

Cf. non-editorial -t t- (II.26c), -d d- (VI.5c).

Some other non-silent editorial changes which may be noted here are as follows.

(i) The common manuscript interchange between dh and gh and between bh and mh, in medial and final position, has been adjusted with reference either to the forms given in IGT or, failing that, to the forms as they are historically attested.

dh emended to gh: e.g. I.1d, 3b, 4cd, II.14c, 27d, 34d, III.4c, 8a, IV.7c, 9b, V.23d, 31c, VI.15d, VIII.3d, IX.16c, 21b, 28b, 29c, 42a, 43b, 47a, 48b, 50c, XII.10d, 15b, 26c, 34b.

gh emended to dh: e.g. I.1a, IA.1d, II.3b, 7d, 28d, V.50c, 57c, 59c, VII.4b, VIII.8c, IX.49c, X.1d, 3bd, 21b, XI.3d, 38d, 41b, 43b, XII.39c, 53a.

bh emended to mh: V.1d, VII.22a.

mh emended to bh: II.11a, 15a, 16a, 26a, IV.38b, VII.4d, VIII.6c, X.45a, 49b.

Note also: mh emended to dh II.24b.
bh emended to dh XII.14d.
gh emended to bh III.4d.

(ii) ph is sometimes written for bh and this has been adjusted as follows:

-ph- emended to -bh- IX.12d, 51a, XII.35a, 57d.

-ph emended to -bh III.7b, IX.16a, 51c, XII.20d, 35b, 46c, 49b.

(iii) In the case of simple prepositions combined with the possessive pronoun, second person singular, I have followed the teaching of IGT i.20 in showing the consonant of the pronoun as voiced before consonant-initial nouns and as unvoiced before vowel-initial nouns or nouns in fh-.

(iv) Glide vowels, when absent in the manuscript, have been inserted editorially in the case of stressed words. E.g. II.19cd, 25a, III.1d, 5b, 9b, IV.9d, 43a, V.44b, 45d, IX.10a, 28b, 32c, 36d, X.32c, 37ab, XI.12c, 29a, 45b.

(v) The genitive singular of ó, whether in surnames or when meaning 'descendant, grandson', is frequently written uí in the manuscripts. In accordance with IGT ii.168-9, this has been emended to í throughout. E.g. IX.38d, 58c, XII.40b, 60a.

(vi) The genitive and vocative singular of mac, whether in surnames or when meaning 'son', when written plene, frequently takes the form mic. This has been emended to its correct Classical form meic (IGT ii.15) throughout. E.g. I.1b, IA.1ab, 3b, V.77b,

XI.42a.

(vii) The simple preposition i, in combination with the singular article, has been emended from MS sa to san at II.10c (see note) and XI.34c but not at Poem VII line 96 (see above).

(viii) The simple preposition ar, and the possessive pronoun first person plural which takes the same form, are sometimes written air in manuscripts, contracted or plene, and this has been adjusted throughout. E.g. IA.2c, IX.10d, 19a, 42b, 46c, XII.48a.

(ix) Instead of the usual contraction, agus/ is is sometimes denoted by et (plene). This has been given the requisite Irish form where it occurs: II.21c, IV.54d, 55c.

(x) Length-marks, omitted in the manuscript, are inserted editorially, this being indicated with a macron. In such cases it has not been considered necessary to give variant readings. Note that mark of length is always indicated over eo contrary to modern usage. A diaeresis is used to indicate the first syllable of a hiatus-word.

(xi) Miscellaneous non-silent orthographical emendations:

fp(h)- emended to ph- IA.2c, V.5a, 76a, XI.6a.

f(h)f- emended to bhf- IX.6a, 42b, 53b.

t(h)s(h)- emended to sh- III.8c, VIII.18c, IX.21c,
44a, XII.12b; (see, however,
VI.15d n.).

-th(ch)- emended to -ch- V.16b, XII.56a, 57a.

-c- emended to -g- III.1a, 3a.

-t- emended to -d- IX.16a.

-t emended to -d IX.46a.

-tt- emended to -d- X.21d.

-cc emended to -dh XII.22b.

-g emended to -dh XII.36d.

ai emended to aoi III.15b.

-lth- emended to -lt- (in passive) III.16c.

Editorial operations effected silently

All manuscript contractions are generally expanded silently. In cases of doubt, however, the unexpanded manuscript reading is given in the apparatus. In the

case of variant readings, the expansion of manuscript contractions is indicated with underlining. The sed-contraction is everywhere expanded (e)(a)cht: on this point see Professor Ó Cuív's remarks in Ériu xx (1966) 101 n. 1 and compare scribal usage noted by Professor Carney in Regimen na sláinte i, p. xlvii n. 2. The et-contraction (see (ix) above) is expanded as agus, is or 's as required by metre. 'Tall' e is written either ea or ei as the orthography demands.

Marks of length in the manuscript are ignored when occurring over the following: the simple prepositions fa, le and tre when not combined with any other particle; nach; the diphthongs ia, ua, ao(i); vowels preceding the consonants ll, m, nn, ng, rr. When eu/éu occurs it has been silently changed to éa.

The remaining silent emendations may be indicated in tabular form:

Manuscript	Edited text
-c	-g (in <u>tug</u> and <u>táinig</u>)
cc-	gc-
tt-	dt-
-nd-	-nn- (non-compounds)
-nd	-nn
sc	sg (all positions)
sp	sb (all positions)
st	sd (all positions)

fo	fa
gor	gur
co/ gu	go
as	is (copula)
in	an (article)
a	i (preposition)

Cases of non-emendation

(i) Vowels in the unstressed syllables of stressed words are not interfered with except to insert glide-vowels where necessary (see above). It is therefore to be understood that spellings such as Deasmhomhan and dtighiornais (II.20b, 27b respectively) are scribal.

(ii) Glide-vowels are not inserted in unstressed parts of speech. On the other hand, if they occur in the manuscript they are allowed to stand in the text. Thus we have níorbh V.48c and nírbh V.47d; níor IX.28a and nír IX.19c; gidh IV.6a and giodh VII lines 9 and 12²²; léar IX.31b and lér XI.20d; géar II.30a and gér II.16a; iona X.1d and ina XII.26b.

22 Giodh may be stressed or unstressed (IGT i.16, BST 225.7-9) but no stressed example occurs in the present collection: cf. IV.38c, VIII.30a.

(iii) The simple preposition de is, without exception, always written do and this has been allowed to stand as there are a number of instances where one is unsure which of the two is intended. (This is not the case with a for i, see above.)

(iv) In stressed and unstressed forms of the propositions do and de, and in the conjunction dá, the initial d- sometimes appears lenited in the manuscripts. Where this occurs it has been allowed to stand. E.g. V.15a, VII.6ad, VIII.17d, X.11a, 16a, XII.11b.

(v) The possessive pronouns mo and do, when occurring before vowel-initial nouns, and not preceded by prepositions (other than ar, tar, um and ós), may take the forms m', t' or mh', th' and this variation has not been disturbed in the texts edited here.

(vi) The occasional doubling of the liquids l, n and r preceding dentals in short stressed syllables has not been interfered with. Thus, for example, we have uirrthi VIII.22c and uirthi XI.3d; Uлтаigh II.22d and Ulltach II.34b; see also IV.46d n.

(vii) The spellings of beitte IV.23a, caithi^t V. 50a and creidthi XII.27b have not been disturbed.

In the case of (i)-(vi) above, where manuscript readings vary, these readings are not recorded in the apparatus.

INITIAL MUTATIONS

Sléagar Any editorial approach to initial mutations in dán díreach must take account of a feature known as 'sléagar' which Fr McKenna has elucidated in BST Appendix IV. Essentially this means that if a noun in the genitive case is directly preceded by the word governing it (not in the genitive case) and is followed by another genitive (noun or adjective) in apposition to it, when eclipsis or non-mutation is expected on such a noun lenition may occur instead, and non-mutation may occur when lenition is expected.

When not demanded by the metrical environment the purpose of this teaching is unclear. However, the present collection abounds with examples such as 'le ríoghaibh mhac Míleadh' (Poem IV.53d), 'tingheallta Chloinne Conaill' (Poem IX.56d), 'fa thriath chríochphobal gCualann' (Poem XII.18d), 'tairrngiortach chríche Cormoic' (Poem XII.48b). On the other hand we also have a number of examples where 'sléagar' is metrically necessary of which the following is a sample: 'ag Gaoidhealaibh fhóid Fhéilim' (Poem IV.14b), 'do-chínn urmhór fhear n-Éirionn' (Poem IV.17b), 'oighidh fleisgi fíonTeamhrach' (Poem IX.13b), 'ag caoi flatha finnbhearta' (Poem IX.33b), 'A-táid i bhfeart fleisge Broin' (Poem XI.12a), 'do dhreagan fuile Feidhlim' (Poem XI.53d).

Cadad Attention must also be paid to the delenition of homorganic consonants in the context of external sandhi. The commentary on this feature in the bardic tracts is contained in IGT i. 50-52 and 69 (= BST 213.16, 9a.19). The teaching there is not as unambiguous, with regard to the written text, as one

might wish it to be²³ - cf. 'ní cóir na séimhighthe ... do rádh do ghaoidheilg giodh cóir d'ogham iad', 'ní cóir gaoídhailge ... gé bheith séimh d'ogham', 'lom is cóir do ghaoidheilg iad 7 séimh d'ogham' - and this had led to differences of interpretation among modern editors. Thus some - inexplicably, to my mind - regard written lenition as being proscribed²⁴ while others, in O Rahilly's words, regard it as 'prescribed, or at least authorized'.²⁵ Being thus open to interpretation, I interpret this teaching as being permissive rather than prescriptive²⁶ and therefore, in the collection of poems edited here, where no lenition is shown in the manuscript in such circumstances, lenition has not been inserted editorially; neither has it been removed where it does occur. The following is a list of examples illustrative of this policy.

Lenition: IV.61b, 66b, VI.11a, VIII.9c, 20a, 40d, 49a, IX.22a, X.47a, 53c, 55b, XI.17a, XII.48b, 51c.

Delenition: II.2b, IV.56a, 60a, VIII.26a, 42c, 46b, X.44b, 52b, 55b, XI.24c, XII.8c, 14c.

The direct object The tracts are particularly informative with regard to the initial mutations of

23 On the other hand, the seventeenth-century grammarians, Ó hUiginn and Ó hEodhusa, were in no doubt that lenition should always be shown in the written text, Ó hEodhusa even extending it to d- after the article (e.g. an dhearna); see Graiméir, 9, 10, 119-20.

24 TD, p. cii; Magauran, p. xvii; Ní Dhomhnaill, Duanaireacht, 22.

25 Desid., pp. xxi-xxii; cf. B. Ó Cuív, 'The observations of medieval Irish scholars on sandhi phenomena in Irish' in Aarsleff et. al. (eds) Papers in the history of linguistics, (107-15) 114-5.

26 See Carney, The poems of Blathmac, 146.790 n. for a similar interpretation.

nouns in the accusative case when direct objects of verbs.²⁷ The texts edited here have only necessitated editorial intervention, in this area, (i) in the insertion of lenition on a direct object asa dtéid a réim where the noun is singular and is not preceded by the article (IV.79a, XII.36b); (ii) insertion of lenition on the direct object of a noun a n-anann a réim where the noun is singular and is not preceded by the article (IV.21d, 43b, VII.16b);²⁸ (iii) insertion of the requisite eclipsis on the adjective governed by a noun such as that in (ii) (X.31d); (iv) as in (i) with insertion of eclipsis on the accompanying adjective (VI.17d, XII.46d).

Cosg réime On this feature cf. Poems V.37b n. (plural) and IX.27c n. (singular).

Prepositions The initial mutation of a word preceded by a simple preposition is, with one exception (noted below), uncomplicated. That of a word preceded by preposition plus singular article, or of a word immediately following and dependant upon a word of singular number governed by a simple preposition with or without the singular article (or possessive pronouns), is not so straightforward as usage varies unpredictably from manuscript to manuscript.²⁹ I have therefore found it necessary, for the purposes of the collection edited here, to adopt a policy of standardization as outlined below. Unless otherwise indicated, examples cited illustrate editorial intervention.

27 Cf. IGT i. 78-81, 135; for analysis see BST Appendix VIII.

28 Such lenition is optional but is metrically necessary in this case.

29 Cf. situation in Magauran and YBL as outlined in Éigse iii (1941-2) 55-9.

(i) Prepositions with dative

Lenition follows the dative singular of the article, noun or adjective except when either sléagar or cadad is in operation.

a h- VI.1c; but 'a gach nduine' (non-editorial)
II.14a n.

ag IX.25a, 32b, XII.15d; note cadad VI.4a.

***de^L** III.1d; note cadad VI.16a.

do^L VI.5bc; note cadad VII.11b.

fa^L 'under' VIII.2b, IX.9b (in both of these cases, MS eclipsis has been changed to non-mutation as cadad is in operation), IV.31a.

goⁿ 'with' V.1d, X.13c, 43c.

iⁿ 'in' II.4c, 17c, 35d, III.3d, 4c, IV.53b;³⁰ note sléagar (metrically necessary) XI.12a; cadad (metrically necessary) IV.13d.

iarⁿ, arⁿ XI.45a;³¹ note sléagar IX.3c, XI.40c (metrically necessary).

³⁰ Cf. non-editorial, metrically necessary instances II.7c, IX.5c.

³¹ Cf. BST 189.18-30.

ó^L V.51c, VII.21b, IX.49d, XII.22a;³² note cadad
X.31c, XI.13c.

ós^L II.31c, XII.13c, 56c.³³

réⁿ⁻ no instance of editorial intervention.

(ii) Prepositions with accusative

Eclipsis is shown after the singular article, noun or adjective (except in cases of sléagar) when governed by the following prepositions.³⁴

fa^L 'around, about, concerning' VI.20a, VIII.9d, 11c, 29d, X.55c, XI.47d, XII.5d; note sléagar XII.4b, 6d, 18d.

gan^L IV.12d.³⁵

32 Cf. non-editorial, metrically necessary instances X.49c, XI.44c.

33 Cf. BST 188.21; IGT i. 73; Thurn. Gramm., 527.

34 A case could be made for extending to prepositional usage the rule whereby either eclipsis or non-eclipsis is permissible on the accusative singular, following the article, of a noun a n-anann a réim (see references in n. 27 supra). It has been my experience, however, that such extrapolation leads only to uncertainty and inconsistency and that, in this case, it is best to adhere to a system which is sanctioned by historical usage.

When a plural noun follows these prepositions, that noun is usually in the dative case. Exceptions are gan IV.20a, IX.29b; idir XII.51a n.; mar IX.32a.

35 For mutation and case after gan and mar see IGT i.7, 70, 67, 108, 129, v.149, BST 213.18, 31, 214.31-2. For non-editorial examples for gan from the present collection see VII.26b, IX.6b, X.32d.

go 'to' IV.12b, VIII.26c, IX.51b, XII.2d;³⁶ note sléagar V.25c.

iⁿ 'into' IX.46a, XI.34c.³⁷

idir^L II.22b, XI.23c, XII.51a.

le II.5a, IV.44d, VIII.5b, 7c, X.12d, XI.47b.

mar^L I.2c, VIII.19b, 37b, XI.48c.³⁵

re IA.1c, II.15d, IV.6b, 7c.

tre^L VI.14b, IX.43d; note sléagar XI.4d, 33d.³⁸

tar³⁹ II.36b, V.14c, VI.6b, IX.21d, X.41d; note sléagar IA.3a.

um^L II.2b, 14c, V.51a, IX.1d, XI.4c; note sléagar IX.11d.

(iii) The preposition **ar**

The bardic grammarians distinguished three prepositions which could take either the dat. sg. or acc. sg. depending on whether ciall chomhnaidhe or ciall shiobhuil was intended. These were the prepositions ar, fa and i.⁴⁰ This reflects the

36 Eclipsis confirmed by alliteration IV.60d.

37 Eclipsis confirmed by alliteration XII.37c.

38 Note, however, that dat. sg. appears to be metrically necessary in IX.25d (but see note) and XI.16c.

39 Lenition is optional after this preposition: see BST 188.32-3, 190.1-4, 192.3-5.

40 IGT i.73; BST 194.2-5.

position in Old Irish save that in Early Modern Irish verse the preposition for has been replaced by ar. In the present edition it has been possible to effect a clear semantic distinction between dative and accusative usage in the singular number in the case of fa and i (see above). In the case of fa this distinction is not really between rest and motion⁴¹ but between fa 'under' and fa which has been confused with um.⁴²

The situation regarding ar, however, is altogether confused and the tracts are of limited use in unravelling this confusion. Their prime concern is with initial mutation after the preposition and here the teaching seems to be that ar may or may not lenite a following word in the accusative singular a n-anann a réim but apparently does not lenite a noun in the dative singular which has a form in the dative singular different to its nominative singular form.⁴³ If a noun asa dteid a réim is followed by a noun in the genitive case, the first noun should be lenited.⁴⁴ The treatment of this subject is so scant and partial that its interpretation and its usefulness is questionable in the extreme⁴⁵ and in the present edition I have adopted a policy of laissez-faire with regard to initial mutation following ar.

The initial affection of a noun or adjective following and dependant upon the singular article or noun governed by ar is not dealt with in the tracts. The one exception is in the case of the so-called

41 The one example I have noted of fa 'under' with ciall shiobhuil is XI.44c which is not relevant to the present discussion.

42 See TD i, p. lxxii.

43 BST 188.22-31, 189.5, 190.5-6, 192.3.

44 IGT ii.21.

45 For McKenna's remarks on the question see BST, pp. 106-7, 110.

'compound-prepositions', where eclipsis is specified,⁴⁶ but even this is not free from contradiction: thus we have 'a-tú ar sgáth bhfir' with 'fhir' marked lochdach immediately followed by 'Rachad ar sgáth fhir ón fhinntigh' marked cóir. In the present edition I have allowed ar cúl chaoilshleagh (Poem IV.50d) to stand unchanged. I have likewise refrained from interfering with initial mutations in other situations after a singular noun governed by ar, save to insert them editorially where none occur. In this I have been guided by the motion/ rest doctrine, unsatisfactory and subjective as that may be. For instance, the editorial lenition in IV.11d is supported by the non-editorial lenition in XI.17d, though the latter could always be accounted an instance of sléagar. The editorial eclipsis in brisdear cath ar a chúil bhfann VIII.32b and in brisdior leó ar a lucht gcogaidh IX.46c is based on the predominance of accusative usage in such phrases in the earlier language.⁴⁷

Lenition: miscellaneous

(i) Copula, present indicative relative is

Lenition is regular after this form: see IGT i.90 and BST 199.11. Where this lenition is not present in the manuscript on which a given text is based, it has been inserted editorially; e.g., IV.36c, V.35a, X.46b. In

⁴⁶ Ibid. 188.6-10, 16-20.

⁴⁷ Cf. DIL M, 29.11, 15, 17, 21, 22, 24, 26, 30, 34.

X.52c there occurs an example where non-lenition is apparently metrically necessary: 'gruaidhe chorcra is fearr foladh'; contrast 'slat dochaithmhe is fhearr don fhiodh' V.32c (non-editorial). See note to X.52c.

(ii) Genitive singular

For lenition/ non-lenition after nouns with consonantal declensions or whose gen. sg. form is longer than that of the nom. sg. form, see Poem IV.5c n.

On lenition after gen. of gach see Poem IV.22b n.

On irregular lenition after gen. sg. of a feminine noun see Poem II.7d n., 13c n.

(iii) muna^L

Lenition has been inserted editorially (in preference to MS eclipsis) at VIII.21a (metrically necessary) and XII.26a.

(iv) Editorial removal of manuscript lenition

This has been effected after masculine nouns in the nominative singular at e.g., IX.33d, XI.1c.

Eclipsis: miscellaneous

(i) 'Dynamic eclipsis'

See IV.18a n., IX.37c n., X.8a.

(ii) Non-eclipsis after genitive plural

See II.10b n.

(iii) Eclipsis after nach

See IV.5a n.

LAYOUT OF TEXT

Word-separation, line-separation and the consecutive numbering of quatrains are all editorial as is the arrangement and numbering of the prose paragraphs and lines in Poem VII as already noted.

Lenition which has been inserted editorially is indicated by an underlined **h**. Square brackets are used in III and IX to contain hypothetical readings where the manuscript text has been damaged. They serve a similar purpose in VII but in this case the restored readings are verifiable from other manuscripts.

The use of macron and diaeresis has been noted under the discussion of orthography above.

Apart from the capital letter at the beginning of each quatrain, which is invariably scribal,⁴⁸ all capitals are editorial. So too are all marks of punctuation: commas, colons, semi-colons, apostrophes, parentheses, em dashes, quotation marks, question marks, exclamation marks and full points.

The hyphen has been used to separate h, n and t (of the masculine article, nominative singular) from vowel-initial words. It has also been used to indicate the separation between proclitic particles and the stressed parts of certain verbs (e.g. a-tá, a-deir) and adverbs (e.g. a-réir, a-nocht) and also to show the stress-division in the placename Iosra-héal (see XII.30a n.).

48 The scribal capital at the beginning of Poem IX.15 has been removed silently; see notes to IX.14 and 15.

POEMS I, IA

SWIFT BROOK
BOND

Introduction

Nat. Lib. Scot. MS Adv. 72. 2. 14 (formerly Gaelic MS LXIV)¹ contains an important collection of religious verse of the Classical E. Mod. Irish period. Dating from c. 1582², this manuscript contains, *inter alia*, a number of poems relating to 'St Patrick's Purgatory' in Loch Derg, Co. Donegal, among which is the earliest copy of Fearghal Óg's poem beginning 'Slán uaim ag oiléan Pádraig'.³

The two short pieces edited here are found at ff. 21r and 27v respectively.⁴ Poem I is a fragment of four quatrains⁵ and is ascribed to 'Fearghal Óg'. This may not necessarily be our poet as another of that name, Fearghal Óg Ó hUiginn, apparently a contemporary of Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird⁶, is represented with one poem in the manuscript at f. 28r. On the other hand there is nothing in Poem I to suggest that it might not have been composed by our poet.

Both poems are concerned with repentance and it is possible therefore, that they too are to be associated with the Loch Derg poems. Poem IA

- 1 Described Quiggin, 'Prolegomena', 50-54; Mackimmon, 103-4; Mackechnie, 241-5.
- 2 This date appears in the lower margins of ff. 1v, 5v, 6r/v, 7r/v, 8r/v, 9r/v, 10r. Mackechnie, 241, states that '1582' is also visible on f. 5r, but I cannot find it there.
- 3 See General Introduction, chapter (iii).
- 4 Another poem by our poet, that beginning 'Ná déana díomas a dhuine', immediately precedes poem IA here, at f. 27v.
- 5 None of the cataloguers noticed that the matter on f. 21v is, in fact, a new poem, that beginning 'Teachtair dÍleas ag Dia' (Dán Dé XIV).
- 6 Cf. TD ii, 313.

emphasises the urgency of the need for repentance, a theme which, as noted in the General Introduction, is a constant feature of Fearghal Óg's religious work. Poem I, however, is the more interesting as it treats of a theme common in Irish and Medieval Christian literature in general. This is the request for the 'gift of tears'.⁷ Deriving ultimately from Biblical sources, the second beatitude in particular, this aspect of the doctrine of compunction features prominently in patristic writings.⁸ Not surprisingly the necessity of weeping is also frequently alluded to in Medieval penitentials.⁹

Tears are perceived as the external manifestation of a penitent spirit¹⁰ and the repentant sinner beseeches God to give him the grace to weep. The penitent's heart is often seen as frozen or hardened and can only be melted through God's grace.¹¹ This is the theme of the poem of Fearghal Óg's which begins 'Mairg nach doirteann a dhéara'.¹² Indeed, because St. Peter is often used to illustrate the efficacy of the tears of repentance¹³, it is not surprising to find him frequently mentioned in this

7 For poems on this theme in Irish literature see Éigse xiv (1971-2) 17-26; EIL Poem 27; Eriu xix (1962) 4-6; Carney, Medieval Irish lyrics XXX (=Éigse i (1939) 248); McKenna, Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh LI; Celtica xvi (1984) 171-4 (and see Celtica xviii (1986) 150).

8 See Hausherr (trans. A. Hufstader), Penthos the doctrine of compunction in the Christian East chapter III et passim.

9 For example, see references in McNeill and Gamer, Medieval hand-books of penance, 474 s.v. Tears.

10 Cf. PH, lines 6442-4.

11 Cf. Scáthán, lines 125ff., especially 300-312.

12 Di D 39.

13 Ibid., qq. 7-8; Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh LI. II; Philip Bocht 24-11; Hyde, Abhráin diadha Chúige Connacht i, 206.

context in Fearghal Óg's verse.¹⁴ As Poem I appears to be incomplete we cannot tell whether or not it contained such a reference.

Metre Poem I : deibhidhe, dán díreach.

Poem IA: rannaigheacht bheag, dán díreach.

14 Cf. Aith. D 54.26; Di D 20.44; Poem XII.61n.

I

1 Bean glas dom chroidhi, a Choimhdhe;
fóir mē a Mheic ar Seathairne;
nā leig gan aithrighe inn,
maithmhighe deid do dhlighfinn.

2 Osgail de go ndearnainn dēir;
mairg fuair i n-oighreacht eisēin,
mar shéad bhfine fuair misi
an cridhe cruaidh cloichisi.

3 Rothrom chodlas mo chridhe:
mosgail ē rem aithrighe;
a-tám i dtóirrchim go trom
agus gan oirchill agam.

1 Remove the fetter from my heart, o Lord; help me,
o Son of our Sister; do not leave us unrepentant, I
should deserve forgiveness from you.

2 Release it that I may shed a tear; I received as
an heirloom this hard heart of stone, woe to him who
inherited that.

3 Too heavily sleeps my heart: waken it that I may
repent; I am in a heavy slumber and am unprepared.

Heading: Fearghal Og .cc.

- 1 a choimhghe; b mhic; seatharne; d maithfidhe; deit.
2 c fine; d croidhe.
3 a croidhe; b aithridhe; d agus gan] sgan.

- 4 An dā dheirc lē ndearna mē
do mhīrēir, a Mhaic Mhuire,
tabhair maithmhighe, a Dhē, dáibh,
go rē aithrighe d'fhaghāil.

4 O Son of Mary, the two eyes with which I disobeyed you, forgive them, o God, until such time as I receive repentance.

4 b mic; c maithfidhe; d aithridhe.

IA

- 1 Saor misi a Mheic an Dūilimh,
a Mheic gan eiteach ēinfhir;
cosmhail sinn re síol n-Ādhaimh
fa chīogh th'ālaidh rinn rēidhigh.

- 2 Baoghal linn, a Dhē, ar ndearadh
i n-eirr mo rē dā rabhar;
bī ar mo thaobh dā dtī an phudhar,
a chraobh umhal trī dtamhan.

1 Save me o Son of the Creator, o Son who refuses no man; we are akin to the race of Adam: make peace with us in the matter of your wounded breast.

2 O God, if I were at the end of my life I would consider myself in danger of being rejected; be at my side if the misfortune comes, o humble branch of three stems.

Heading: 'An fear cna .i. Firgall Og Mac an Bhaird .cc.'

- 1 a mhic; b mhic; c adhaimh; d halaigh.
2 b eir; c air; fphudhar.

3 Tar neimh ghona Dē dhūiligh
 nā congaibh mē, a Mheic ghrādhaigh,
 a-muigh i ngioll rem ghnīomhaibh;
 sīodhaigh riom fa fhuil t'ālaidh.

4 Baoghal dōibh dāil do chrūsa,
 gidh mōr ar chāch do chīossa
 bī soirbh red chloinn fān gcāssa;
 roinn grāsa oirn a Īosa.

Saor misi.

3 O beloved Son, despite the poison of the wound of
 God the Creator do not exclude me because of my deeds;
 make peace with me in the matter of the blood of your
 wound.

4 Though great is your tribute on everyone, be easy
 with your children in this case, the shedding of your
 blood has placed them in danger; give us grace, o
 Jesus.

3 b condaimh; mhic.

4 d orn.

Notes

I

1 a ar Seathairne The Blessed Virgin is commonly referred to as 'ar/mo s(h)iúr' in devotional verse in this period; e.g. 'gaol mo sheathar' Di. D 5. 17d, 'fuil mheic ar seathairne' IGTii, ex. 899, and cf. Philip Bocht, p.xxii.

Note the 'breacadh', mé: chroidhe/Choimhdhe; cf. Breacadh, 24(d), 27. Other 'breacadh', governed by Breacadh 24, 28, occurs in q. 2, de: fine/cridhe and in q. 4, mé:Dhé:ré:Mhuire.

c leig The root vowel of this verb may either be long (IGT iii. 71) or short (IGT iii. 36).

d deid, a permitted variant of MS deit (BST 193.18), is required for perfect rime.

2 a For the idiom 'osglaidh de' see DIL O, 165.38-44, Di. D 65.14b and cf. Poem VI. 7a n.

c cridhe is a permitted variant of MS croidhe (IGT ii.2) and is necessary for perfect rime.

3 b Or, perhaps, 'waken at with my repentance'?

c a-tám, literally 'we are'.

d In the manuscript this line wants two syllables; we might also emend is gan a oirchill agam.

4 bc Deliberate confusion between the persons of the Trinity is commonplace in this type of verse; cf. Poem IA. 3 and see Dán Dé, p. xiv and Philip Bocht, p. xix.

IA

1 ab Mheic: Mheic This is a possible instance of the metrical fault 'caoiche' (IGT v. 8, 108-16), though it may be obviated by the presence of 'breacadh fíre patrúin' - i/íá/íá/i - in the second leathrann: see Breacadh 36, 57. The instance of 'rudhrach' (IGT v. 10) in q. 2 cd (bí:dtí:trí) is not so easily resolved, however. We might again invoke Ó Máille's theories by emending linn to leinn (BST 194.14) and accepting #ea = /a/ which would give a pattern in ab of e/é/a//e/é/a, but this seems rather convoluted to me.

d Cf. 'fan gcíogh rinn má réidighe' Aith. D 59.19d and with 'chíogh th'álaidh' here cf. 'dearna an álaidh' Di. D 26.23d.

2 b eirr (MS eir) is the correct form (IGT ii.39).

d 'Trí tamhna' is a common bardic figure for the Trinity; e.g. Di. D 25.9b, Aith. D 71.15c.

3 b congaibh (MS condaímh) I have restored the historical spelling here, though editors frequently retain that of the manuscript; e.g. POR 33.15b, DMU IV. 8c.

4 d grása (IGT ii. 2) may be either singular or plural.
oirn (MS orn) is the correct form (BST 193.26).

POEM II

SWIFT BROOK
BOND

Introduction

The following poem was composed on the death of Éamonn mac Maoil Mhuire mheic Dhonnchaidh mheic Shuibhne. The 'Four Masters' record his death, in the year 1580, as follows:

Emann mac Maoilmuire mic Donnchaidh mic
Toirrdhealbhaigh Meic Suibhne a Tuathaibh Toraighe
do dhol do dhenamh creiche for druing do na
díbherccachaibh go Glend Fleiscci. O Donnchadha 7
mac dearbhrathar don Emann sin .i. Goffraidh
Carrach mac Donnchaidh Bacaigh do breith for Emann
7 a mharbhadh co miscneach mioghaolmhar 7 ni
bhaoi i nErinn an adhaidh sin aon mac gallocclaigh
as mo do chendaigh dfhíon 7 déiccsi ina an tÉmann
sin.¹

The Mac Suibhne gallóglaigh came originally from Knapdale and Kintyre² and settled in Tír Chonaill some time in the second half of the thirteenth century.³ From the initial 'beach-head' of Fánad⁴ Clann Suibhne expanded so that, by the end of the fifteenth century, branches were to be found in two other areas of Donegal (Clann Suibhne na dTuath, Clann Suibhne Baghuineach), in Connacht, Thomond, Ormond⁵ and in Munster proper.

1 AFM v, 1728.

2 A. McKerral, 'West Highland mercenaries in Ireland' in The Scottish Historical Review xxx (1951) 1-14.

3 Scots Merc, 30-31. For a traditional and somewhat fanciful account of the conquest of Fánad by Clann Suibhne see LCS, 2-16.

4 For the senior branch of Fánad see Poem III.

5 Fr. Walsh, LCS, xlii, states that the precise location of Clann Suibhne in Ormond 'is as yet unknown'. For some indications see Cal. Ormond deeds v, 230, and 'Three McSwiney wills' in Cork hist. soc. jn. xxxiv (1929) 117-8, (xxxv (1930) 53-4). A general account of the branches of Clann Suibhne is given in LCS, i-xliv; see also J.J. Silke, 'Old Rathmullan' in Donegal Annual xi/1 (1974) 26.

In this poem, great emphasis is placed on Éamonn's genealogy or, at least, on his affinities with Tír Chonaill in general and Clann Suibhne na dTuath⁶ in particular. General references to this occur in qq. 5 and 18, but the main section comprises qq. 21-7 which lead into the second part of the comparison to Fionn mac Cumhaill (see below). Here we are told that Éamonn was descended from Clann Suibhne na dTuath (q. 21) and that he was reared in Munster (q. 24d⁷), implying that he was born in Tír Chonaill (referred to as his athardha in q. 29c). Hence the emphasis, in qq. 21-4, on Éamonn's dual role in defending the honour of both Munster and Tír Chonaill.

Éamonn's close connections with the Tuatha are further underlined in the climax of this section where it is stated that he was offered, but declined, the chieftaincy of Clann Suibhne na dTuath by Ó Domhnaill (qq. 26-7). This Ó Domhnaill would probably have been Aodh Dubh mac Maghnais who was head of his family 1566-92. The offer would have been made in 1570 on the occasion of the slaying of Murchadh Mall⁸ who had been head of his family since his father, Eoghan Óg, was slain at the battle of Ceann Salach in 1554.⁹ In the event he was succeeded by his brother, another Eoghan Óg, who died in 1596.¹⁰ There would

6 Named after the territory which they occupied in Tír Chonaill, Tuatha Toraighe (cf. q. 21a). For the extent of this territory see UJA xiv (1908) 88. Éamonn's connections with the Tuatha are also made explicit by the 'Four Masters' in their notice of his death, quoted above.

7 'Imnte' here could also refer to 'Tír gConuill' (q. 24b) but q. 25, and subsequent quatrains, argue against this.

8 AFM v, 1636.

9 Ibid. v, 1534-6.

10 Ibid. vi, 1994-6. He was the subject of poems by Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (TD Poem 26) and Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa ('Roinn leithe ar anbhuaín Éireann' in RIA MSS 23 F 16, p. 47, and 23 D 4, p. 379). He, in turn, was succeeded by Maol Muire mac Murchaidh Mhaill who was still remembered in folklore up to recent times; see Béal. iii (1932) 275-82.

have been nothing unusual in this offer, per se, as we know that Ó Domhnaill frequently interfered in the inauguration of his subordinates.¹¹ But that Éamonn should have been considered a likely candidate - if Fearghal Óg's account be true - indicates in what regard he was still held in Tír Chonaill and the strength and closeness of his associations with his patrimony.¹²

In the genealogies compiled by Cú Choigcríche Ó Cléirigh¹³ two branches of Clann Suibhne are distinguished in Munster: 'Clann tSuibhne Desmhumhan' and 'Clann tSuibhne na Muman'.¹⁴ Clann Suibhne na Mumhan¹⁵ were descended, through Maol Muire mac Murchaidh Mhir, from Clann Suibhne Fánad; Clann Suibhne Desmhumhan from Clann Suibhne na dTuath.¹⁶ It is possible, simply from entries in AFM, to reconstruct a genealogy of Éamonn and his family (fig. 1). From comparison with Ó Cléirigh's genealogy, it is clear that this does not conform to the pedigree of Clann Suibhne Deasmhumhan.

A further complication is the fact that there seems to have been at least four distinct families of Clann Suibhne in Munster who could claim 'mac Maoil Mhuire mheic Dhonnchaidh' as their patronymic. These were Éamonn and his brothers, whose great-grandfather was Toirdhealbhach (fig. 1); the brothers Émand and Toirdhealbhach¹⁷ mentioned by Ó

11 In Mac Suibhne Fánad's case see LCS, 70-72; for others cf. BAR i, 118.

12 The factors involved in succession in the late medieval period are discussed by Simms, From kings to warlords, 41-59; for the earlier period see Ó Corráin, 'Irish regnal succession/ a reappraisal' in Stud. Hib. xi (1971) 7-39.

13 RIA MS 23 D 17.

14 Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 40 (= LCS, 112-3).

15 This refers to the Muskerry branch; see Ó Murchadha, Family names of county Cork, 290-99.

16 Cf. genealogies cit. n. 14; a comprehensive genealogy of Clann Suibhne is given in Scots Merc., Genealogy No. I.

17 This Toirdhealbhach is also mentioned by Mac Fhir Bhisigh: see LCS, 89.

Cléirigh (loc. cit.), whose great-grandfather was Maol Muire; the brothers Toirrdhealbhach na coissi croinn¹⁸ and Brian na mBarróg, whose great-grandfather was Ruaidhrí (fig. 2); and Brian Ballach whose great-grandfather was Brian (fig. 2).

We are therefore fortunate that information has survived in another source which helps to elucidate at least some points concerning Éamonn's origins and family. Genealogies of Éamonn's line occur in Lambeth Palace Library MS 635, ff. 14r and 189v-190r. The better and more complete of these is that on ff. 189v-190r and I have reproduced an edited version of this in fig. 3. Personal names are given their Irish form; many details of marriages and offspring - not entirely relevant here - have been omitted save in the case of Éamonn and, to a limited extent, in that of his brother Donnchadh, the father of his slayer, Gofraidh Carrach.

The genealogy is self-explanatory but an important commentary on the early stages accompanies it:

This sept is called Slught Donoghe mac Tyrloghe and is [the] last sept of the Mac Swynes that came into Mounster. Donoghe mac Tirloghe ... was wadged to come into Monster by Fynin Mac Cartie Reaghe and was captaen of his buonies. Moylemurrye [mac Donoghe] Mac Swyne ... was but a chilld when his father died and not beinge regarded by Mac Cartie Reaghe went to his friends into Ulster, but afterward was recalled agayne by Mac Cartie More and was Capten of his buonies, his posteritie ever since have bene following unto Mac Carti More.

18 Confused by both Walsh, *ibid.* 89n., and Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Merc.*, Genealogy No. I, with the brother of the Émand cited by Ó Cléirigh.

It is not possible to piece together a full list of the chiefs of Clann Suibhne na dTuath in the first half of the sixteenth century¹⁹ so that the identity of Toirdhealbhach remains uncertain. However, the important point is that we have here a clear explanation and verification of the closeness of Éamonn's connections with Tír Chonaill: his branch of Clann Suibhne were very recent arrivals in Munster. The statement that all the posterity of Maol Muire mac Donnchaidh were attached to Mac Carthaigh Mór is clearly too generalised, however, as the following note beside the genealogy on f. 14r makes clear:

Note: these McSwynes had no land of inheritance given to them to live upon but had Bonnaght and other allowances vppon the Mac Carties landes, for they were evermore held in wages as mercenarie soulldiors for there defence.

In other words, Sliocht Donnchaidh mheic Thoirdhealbhaigh were inclined to a nomadic rather than a sedentary existence.²⁰ In the case of Éamonn's brothers²¹ we find Donnchadh with Mac Carthaigh Mór, his son Gofraidh with Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna; the sons of Murchadh and Domhnall were with the Barretts; Eoghan was 'consapal Desmumhan' but his three sons were slain at Doire Leathan, in Tír Chonaill, in 1590 while fighting with Mac Suibhne Baghaineach and Ó Baoighill on behalf of Domhnall mac Aodha meic

19 Cf. LCS, xxxiv. The Fynin Mac Cartie Reaghe was probably he who died in 1566, AFM v, 1608.

20 For further evidence of sedentary and 'freelance' galloglaigh see Scots Merc., 58-9.

21 References are as those in fig. 1.

Mhaghnaasa Uí Dhomhnaill who was trying to depose his father.²²

In Éamonn's case this mercenary existence is explicitly referred to by Fearghal Óg in qq. 18-20 of the present poem, culminating in the telling line: 'níor chaor aoincheardcha Éamonn' (q. 20d). One might also take his marriage alliances (fig. 3) to betoken a move from Desmond - where his first two wives came from - to the Carbery/Muskerry district.²³ He would certainly seem to have spent most of the decade which preceded his death in Carbery. In a pardon issued to him and his two sons Colla and Brian²⁴, in February 1572/3, Éamonn is said to be living in Rossebren.²⁵ This is Rossbrin, parish of Skull, barony of West Carbery. In a pardon issued to him and Colla, 30 May 1579, Éamonn was living in B(e)allyhimore.²⁶ I have not succeeded in identifying this place but most of the sixteen other placenames listed in the same pardon are in either West or East Carbery.

We can deduce but very scant details of Éamonn's role in the events of his lifetime. The main events in which he is likely to have been involved were the

22 AFM vi, 1890-92. Among those opposing them was Mac Suibhne na dTuath.

23 For Ó Mathúna's territory in Kinealmeaky see Butler, *Gleanings from Irish history*, 106. For Clann Suibhne in Carbery see Cal. Carew. MSS, 1601-1603, 452 (c. 1574) and cf. 'chloinn Charthoigh Chuain Dor' q. 29a infra, which appears to be a reference to Clann Charthaigh Riabhach. In fact MS 635, f. 14r. refers to Sliocht Domchaidh mheic Thoirdealbhaigh as a Carbery sept. See further below for Éamonn's associations with Mac Carthaigh Mhusgraighe (Earl of Clancarthy) and Mac Carthaigh Riabhach during the Desmond rebellions.

24 This and a further pardon of 1579 (see below n. 32), provides us with an additional detail in the genealogy of Éamonn's family not listed in any of the sources already mentioned.

25 Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 12). 84.2196.

26 Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 13), 113-4.3535.

two rebellions by the Fitzgeralds in 1568-72 and 1579-83. Of his part in the first rebellion we know nothing at all. It is difficult to conceive that he was not involved to some extent, for, by the year 1571, gallóglaigh of Clann Suibhne seem almost to have been synonymous with the forces of rebellion.²⁷ In the year the rebellion broke out we find Éamonn on a raid in East Cork in the company of the Earl of Clancarty. The object of that raid was Lord Roche²⁸ who, in his complaint to the Lord Justices, mentions Edmond M'Swyny as being of that company who, 'with six or seven banners displayed', raided his territory carrying off cattle and killing men, women and children.²⁹

Of the second rebellion we know a little bit more. In December 1579, it was reported from Cork that 'Finnin McCarthy, with two sons of O'Sullivan More and 400 swords, and also Edmund M'Sweeney and his train, have joined the traitors'.³⁰ This association with 'the traitors' seems to have been short-lived. In August of the following year - the year of Éamonn's death - Lord Justice Pelham reported of '80 gallowglasses hired of the McSwines of Carberie, which vowed also to forsake him [sc. the Earl of Desmond] as soon as their bonnaught was expired'.³¹

Even before he was reported to have joined the insurgents, Éamonn had sued for, and received, a

27 See, for example, Ormond's letters of the Spring and Summer campaigns of 1571 against Fitzmaurice, *Cal. SP Ire.* 1509-1573, 449-50. Perhaps the pardon which Éamonn and his two sons received in February 1573 is a sign of their involvement in the rebellion, see n. 25 above.

28 The Roches themselves employed some of Clann Suibhne as constables of their castles, cf. *AFM* v, 1776 (1582).

29 *Cal. SP Ire.* 1509-1573, 390.

30 *Cal. SP Ire.* 1574-1585, 198-9.

31 *Ibid.*, 302.

pardon for his son Brian, on 20 May 1579,³² and ten days later he himself, and another son, Colla, were pardoned³³. This suggests that the brief period he spent with the rebels, in the second insurrection, represented an uneasy alliance on Éamonn's part. It is certain that when he went 'do dhenamh creiche for druing dona díbherccachaibh go Glend Flescci' that he was no longer of their party - a contributory factor in his death, perhaps.³⁴

An interesting feature of this elegy is the sustained comparison of Éamonn to Fionn mac Cumhaill. This occurs in two parts and gives unity and symmetry to the poem. The first part is the main vehicle for the poet's praise of Éamonn and has two stages. In qq. 6-11 Éamonn is regarded as Fionn's equal on the basis that they both functioned as hired soldiers; cf. 'athbhuanna mar Fhionn' q. 11c. In qq. 12-15, however, it is argued that since Éamonn is descended from Niall Naoighiallach (q. 12) and since all the kings who preceded Niall in the réim ríoghraidhe would have been capable of employing Fionn (q. 14), it follows that Éamonn and Síol Suibhne are of nobler stock than Fionn and are consequently more illustrious than him (q. 15).

The second part of the comparison derives directly from the treatment of Éamonn's relation to Clann Suibhne na dTuath (qq. 16-29) discussed above. One cannot but admire the neat way in which Éamonn's birth in Tír Chonaill and death in 'muigh Mhumhan' is

32 Cal. Fiantis Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 13), 29-30.3033.

33 See n. 26 above. Colla left for Spain after Kinsale, cf. Cal. Carew MSS, 1601-1603, 202.

34 On the other hand, the fact that he was on a 'creach' was sufficient reason for him to be attacked by the objects of that raid. One must also keep in mind the 'professional rivalry' between gallóglaigh noted in Scots Merc., 59-60.

made to dovetail with Fionn's birth and death in Leinster and Munster respectively (qq. 30-35).

It is worthy of note that two other poets who were, more or less, contemporaries of Fearghal Óg drew comparisons between members of Clann Suibhne and Fionn mac Cumhaill.³⁵ Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn's poem to Domhnall Mac Suibhne Fánad (see Poem III), which begins 'Leithéid Almhan i nUltuibh',³⁶ is based entirely on such a comparison. As with our poem, mere equivalence does not suffice and the subject's superiority to Fionn is emphasised:

geall ón Fhionn roimhe rachaidh
don Fhionn oile d'Ultachaibh. (q.12)

as is his service to Ó Domhnaill:

Tú gein shochair shíol nDálaigh
tú a n-éanoireas annálaidh.... (q. 26)

Likewise in his poem to Eoghan Óg Mac Suibhne na dTuath, referred to earlier (n. 10), Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa draws a similar parallel, again emphasising the superiority of his subject to Fionn:

Re hainbhúain re hucht gcogaidh
ni guth dóibh nach dearnadair
leath a ndéaninn síol Suibhne
ag díon Éirionn iathghuirme.³⁷

35 Note also Tadhg mac Dáire's reference to Maol Mordha Mac Suibhne Connachtach (cf. TD Poem 25), 'féimídh neamhthlaith mar fhear n-Almhan', Harrison, An chrosántacht, 102. 1c; and cf. q. 18. c n., infra.

36 TD 27.

37 RIA MS 23 F 16, p. 48.11-12; 'dóibh' (b) refers to 'fian Fhim'; read 'ndéineam' in c.

and his service to Ó Domhnaill:

Minic fuair iomlaoid álaídh
ag cosnamh chrú ríoghDhálaigh....³⁸

It is interesting that these three poets present a more or less unified view of Fionn's historic role, a view which accords, to a certain extent, with Céitinn's remarks regarding the fiana:

agus ní raibhe ionnta acht buanadha do
ríoghaibh Éireann re cosnamh agus re caomhna na
críche dhóibh, amhail bhí caiptíne agus
saighdiuiridhe³⁹ ag gach rígh aníú re cosnamh a
chríche féin.

Editorial remarks Our poem is found in four manuscripts:

- (i) RIA MS²³_L F 16 (=F), pp. 199-201, written 1655-9 by Fr Fearghal Ó Gadhra.
- (ii) RIA MS 23 L 17 (=L), ff. 155r-6v, written 1744-5 by Seán Ua Murrchadha na Ráithíneach.
- (iii) Br. Lib. MS Egerton 111, pp. 123-5, written post 1818 by Finghin Ó Sgannail. This is a copy of F's text.
- (iv) UCD O Curry MSS, Vol. 18, pp. 295-8. This is a nineteenth century copy of L's text made by Eugene O Curry.

The Egerton and O Curry manuscripts are of no independent value and have not been used in this edition. Readings such as those at qq. 6bcd, 17a, 31b, 32d, suggest that F and L share a common manuscript tradition. F is the older manuscript and contains one quatrain more than L (q. 35); there are

³⁸ 23 F 16, p. 48.29.

³⁹ Forus Feasa ii, 326.

also a number of instances where F's reading is significantly preferable to L's: qq. 6c, 15b, 18a, 21d, 27b. On the other hand, I have found that L generally maintains a higher degree of accuracy and carefulness than F to the extent that, if F's text were to be used as a basis for the edition, it would involve more emendations than if L's text were used. This conclusion, the evidence for which will be found in the apparatus, is borne out by my examination of the copies of 'D'Oilbh Éarus is beatha a bhás' (Poem X) in F and L. For this reason, I have based the edition on L while supplying readings from F where necessary.⁴⁰

Metre deibhidhe, dán díreach.

40 For the methodology employed here cf. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and scholars, 195-6. The preference for L to F is not without precedent: cf. TD i, p. xci and P. Breatnach, 'The chief's poet' in PRIA 83 C 3 (1983) 38 n.6. In a colophon on f. 96v of 23 L 17, Seán na Ráithíneach informs us that he selected the poems in the manuscript up to that colophon 'a leabhar seannda do sgríobh an deighchleireach Domhnall Ó Gadhra éigin acht ní bhfuaras amach cá ham. Is a seilbh Shéamuis Mhic Coitir a cCurrach Diarmada a nAoibh Liatháin atá sé'. This does not seem to be a slip for Fearghal Ó Gadhra, or at least it does not refer to 23 F 16 as (i) only 21 of the 67 poems in the first half of 23 L 17 are shared with 23 F 16; (ii) 23 F 16 abounds with scribal dates; (iii) there is no evidence to suggest that 23 F 16 was ever in the possession of Mac Coitir.

(Note: references to AFM are to those entries giving the fullest patronymic of the individual in question.)

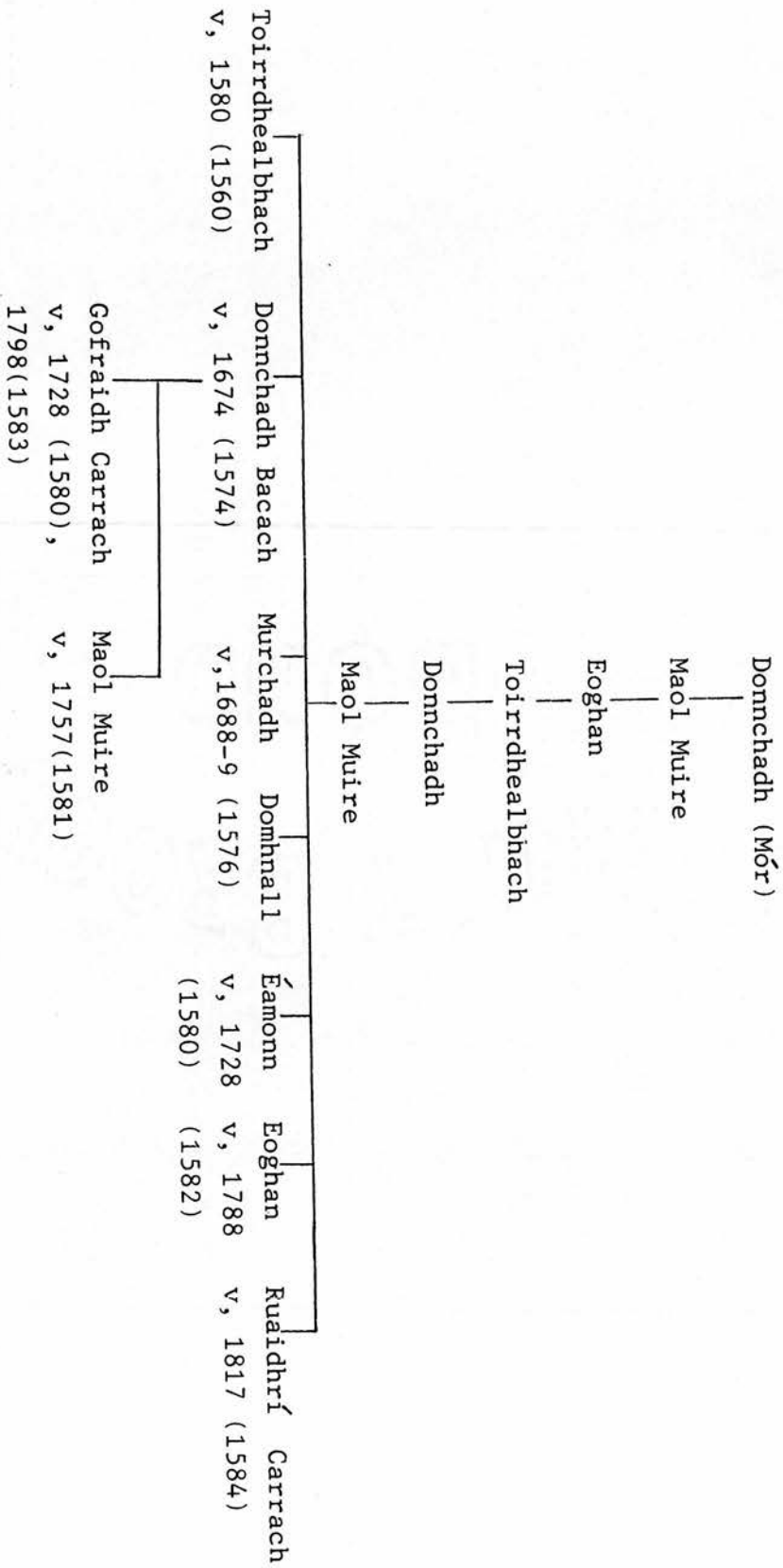


fig. 1

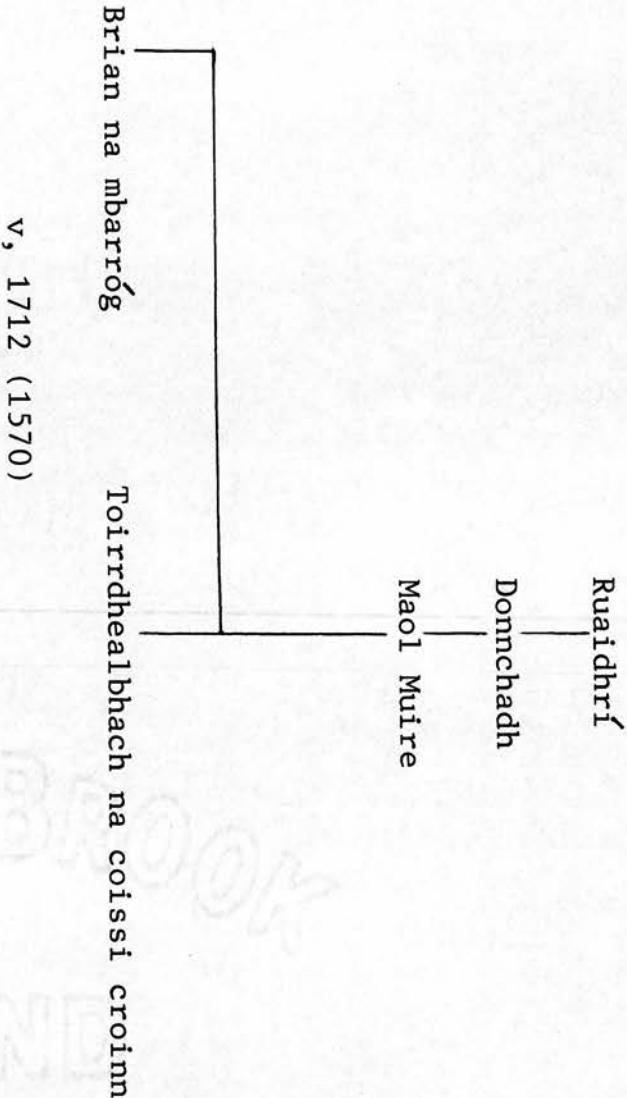
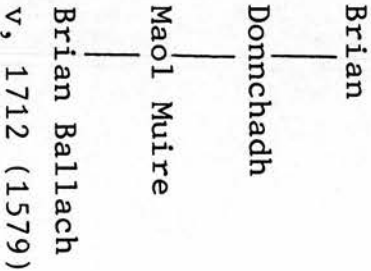


fig. 2



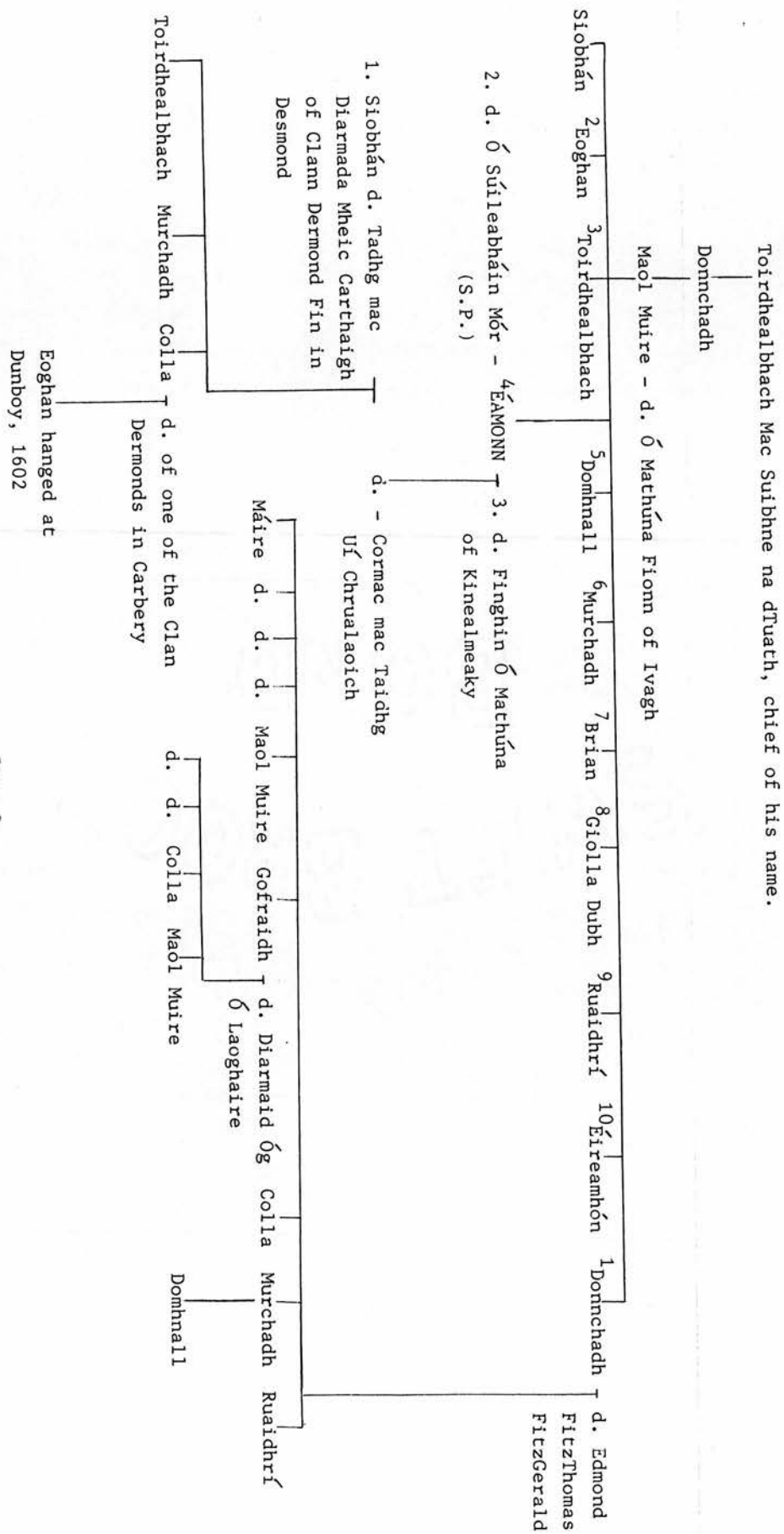


fig. 3

- 1 Cia a-deir gur imthigh Eamonn,
leaca ghairthe ghnúisghnēadhonn,
géag abhla do thabhoigh tnúdh?-
maraidh cé tharla ar dteasdúdh.
- 2 Maraidh clú meic Mhaoil Mhuire
um Bóinn 's um chuan gCorcuighe;
biothmharaidh an chlú do chuir
fa bhrú iothchalaigh Fhorbhuir.
- 3 Mar sin nar imthigh ua Cuinn?-
airrdheana is ēachta Eamuinn:
luadh ortha um Chuachuin na gcath,
's um bruachaibh tolcha Teamhrach.

1 Who says that Eamonn has gone, radiant cheek of a face of bright appearance, branch of an apple-tree which exacted affection? - though it happens that he has died, he lives!

2 The fame of Maol Muire's son lives around Bóinn and the harbour of Corcaigh; the fame which he earned lives forever around the edge of the corn-abounding bank of Forbhar.

3 Eamonn's qualities and exploits are talked about around Cruacha of the battalions and around the banks of the hill of Teamhair - thus, has Conn's descendant [really] departed?

Heading: Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird cct. L, An fear céanna F
(Beannacht siar uaim precedes).

- 1 a imthigh F; b ghartha F; ghnúisghnēadhonn L, gnuísgneadhonn F;
d maroigh F; gé F.
- 2 a Mairoigh F; mhaoilmhuire F; b bhoin F; corcuidhe LF;
c-mhairidh L, -mharoigh F; clú F; choir F; d - chaloigh F.
- 3 a imthigh F; chuinn F; b airrgheana L, airgne F; c luagh F;
chruachuin F; d bhruachuibh F; tholcha F.

4 Teas a dhaonnachta ag dāil chruidh,
 a uaisle ar tír 's ar tonnmhuir,
 's a dháil tonna i muigh Mhumhan:
 ní fhuil orra acht urdhubhadh.

5 Do mhéadaigh le cosnamh gcath,
 is le h-imirt mbeart mbaoghlach,
 fine Suibhne chraoi Chobhthaigh,
 caoi dā gcuimhne ag Conollchuibh.

6 Ionamhail Fhinn mheic Cumhuill,
 fear bhrisde bhearn ndofhulaing
 nár ghabh guaisneimh i gcrú chrann,
 a chlú do uaisleigh Éamonn.

4 The warmth of his kindness distributing wealth,
 his dignity on land and sea, and his dispensing of
 wine-casks in the plain of Mumha: they are but
 [slightly] obscured.

5 By battle-contention and by the performance of
 dangerous deeds, he enhanced the means by which they
 would be remembered by the people of Tír Chonaill, the
 race of Suibhne of the land of Cobhthach.

6 Just like Fionn mac Cumhuill, breaker of
 insufferable breaches who received no dangerous wound
 in a spear-enclosure, his fame exalted Éamonn.

4 a dhaonnacht F; chroidh F; b thír F; thonn-F; c moigh F;
 mnumhan F; d fhail L, bhfoil F; urdhubhadh F.

5 a cath LF; b is] F, s L; bheart F; mbaoghlach F; c chraoi
 cobhthoigh F;
 d chuimhne F; conolchuibh L, a cconallchoibh F.

6 a Ionamhail L, Ionshamhuil F; mhic cubhmhaill F; b bhearnadh LF;
 c i gcrú chrann]F, ó chrú chuinn L; d uaisleidh F.

- 7 Do chosnamh chādhaís a shean,
 olc fuaradur meic Mhíleadh
 gan a thogha i n-Almhain Fhinn
 ōs damhraidh fhola Fhēilim.
- 8 'Na ursain ris an dtaobh thoir,
 níor chubhaidh é acht i n-Almhoin,
 gi bé dār cháir oighreacht Fhinn,
 ar láimh, ar oirbheart inghill.
- 9 Do budh baramhuil é d'Fhionn
 dá mbeidís, do bhreith sgríbhionn,
 na h-Éireannaigh fa umhla
 dá chéimeannuibh cathurdha.

7 The sons of Míl did badly not to elect him in Fionn's Almha, over the warriors of the blood of Féilim, for the protection of the honour of his ancestors.

8 Whoever would have the right to Fionn's inheritance, by virtue of valour and worthy prowess, it would not be proper for him to be [anywhere] but in Almha as a pillar against the eastern side.

9 By the judgement of writings, he would be Fionn's equal were the Irish submissive to his warlike deeds.

7 a a shean] na sean F; b mic F; d damhraigh LF; fheidhlim F.

8 a reis F; taoibh F; b chubhuigh F; c gi] gidh F; oigreacht F.

9 a fhionn F; d dá chéimeannaibh]F, na cceimeannaibh L.

- 10 Maith do thuill mac Mhaoil Mhuire,
do bhreith sgol fhóid Iúghoine,
bheith san bhuannacht do bhí ag Fionn
ar nuaghort Dá Thí timchioll.
- 11 Mac Mhaoil Mhuire Mheic Shuibhne,
cloch chúil chatha Modhuirne,
tuir cháich, athbhuanna mar Fhionn,
cathghuala re ráith Raoilinn.
- 12 Dá mbeith mar do bhí an Niallfhuil,
ua neartmhar Néill Naoighiallaigh,
ní 'na bhuanna do bhiadh sin
acht ag triall uama Uisnigh.

10 In the opinion of the schools of the land of Iúghoine, Maol Muire's son well deserved to be of the buannacht which Fionn had around Dá Thí's bright territory.

11 Son of Maol Muire Mac Suibhne, last defence of the battalion of Modharn, leader of all, another buanna like Fionn, battle-support for the fort of Raoilinn.

12 Were the race of Niall like they [once] were, he would not be a buanna, the mighty heir of Niall Naoighiallach, rather he would be attempting the unification of Uisneach.

10 a thoill F; c san] F, sa L; mbuannacht F; d dha F.

11 a muire F; m^hic F; suimhne L, suibhne F.

12 a an] a F.

- 13 Roimhe, go Niall na naoi nglas,
sé rígh dhéag, dearbhtha an seanchas,
saithe uama fhuile Nēill,
's nīor bhuanna duine díbhséin.
- 14 Buannacht a gach nduine dhíobh
do-gheibheadh Fionn na bhfáidhghníomh
d'uaim na sriobhfhonn um Bóinn mBreagh,
dōibh dá madh ionann aigneadh.
- 15 Dlighidh síol Suibhne, mar soin,
Clann Bhaoisgne do bheith fúthuibh;
Fionn féin agus feōlfhuil Fhinn
re préimh nEōghuin níorbh inghill.

13 Before him, up to Niall of the nine fetters,
[there were] sixteen kings, proven history, a unifying
group of the blood of Niall, and not one of them was a
buanna.

14 Had they all been of one intention Fionn of the
deeds of prophecy would have obtained buannacht from
each of them for the purpose of uniting the watery
lands around Bóinn of Breagha.

15 Clann Bhaoisgne should, therefore, be subordinate
to the race of Suibhne; Fionn himself and Fionn's
flesh and blood were not equal to the stock of Eoghan.

13 c saighthe F; d s] om. F; dhíbhséin F.

14 ā a] ó F; b bhfaidhghníomh F; c um] F, uim L; bhóinn F;
breadh L, bhredh F.

15 a Dlighid F; Suibhne] F, suimhne L; sin LF; b Clann] F,
chlanna L; bhaoisgne F; fúithibh F; d préimh] F, réimh L;
eōghuin LF; inghill] F, ionghill L.

- 16 Gér leór uaisle síol Suibhne
 suil tāinig tuir Mhodhuirne,
 ar shíol mhuighe chnuaighil Chuinn
 do uaisligh uile a n-urruim.
- 17 Bíodh nach budh uasal a fhuil,
 níor bheag, do bhreith gach ughduir,
 dá gcur i n-uaisle i gclár Chuinn,
 lámh agus uaisle Éamuinn.
- 18 Níor bheag d'uaisliughadh chrū Chuinn
 do bheith, i n-aimsir Éamuinn,
 fearthain oinigh fhear n-Uladh
 ar feadh oirir Iarmhumhan.

16 Though the nobility of the tribes of Suibhne was sufficient before the pillar of Modharn arrived, he completely enhanced their honour among the race of the bright-clustered plain of Conn.

17 Even supposing he were not of a noble race, by the judgement of every authority Éamonn's prowess and nobleness would be sufficient to elevate them in the plain of Conn.

18 It was no small ennoblement of the stock of Conn that, in Éamonn's time, the honour of the men of Ulster was disseminated throughout Iarmhumha.

16 a lór F; Suibhne] F, suimhne L; b sul LF; tainig] F, ttainig L; modhuirne F; c chnuaish-] F, chuais-L; choinn F; d uaislidh F
 17 a ufuil L, bhfuil F; b dho F; c choinn F; d lám F; agus] is F.
 18 a d'uaisliughadh] F, duaisle ag L; c Fearthuinn F; d iarmhumhan F.

19 Do thuill, i n-iarthar Éireann,
lámh uaislighthe a n-airdchéimeann,
urruim Ghaoidhiol do chrū Chuinn,
d'aoinfhíodh gach cnú don chrobhuing.

20 Do líon a chlú Ceann Coradh,
's gleannta diamhra Deasmhomhan,
's na maoithghleannta don taobh thall:
níor chaor aoincheardcha Éamonn.

21 Na Tuatha, ó dtáinig a fhuil,
do méadaigheadh san Mhumhuin,
agus Doire is Dún na nGall,
go loighe fa úr d'Éamonn.

19 The hand which ennobled their outstanding feats earned, in the western part of Éire, the respect of the Gaoidhil for the stock of Conn, every nut from one wood for the cluster.

20 Ceann Coradh was full of his renown, and the lonely glens of Deasmhumha, and the gentle valleys on the other side: metal from many forges was Éamonn.

21 The Tuatha, whence he was sprung, and Doire and Dún na nGall, were [all] exalted in Mumha until Éamonn lay beneath [the] clay.

19 b -chéimann F; c ghaoidhil L, ghaoidheal F; choimn F;
d daoinfhídh L, daonfheadh F; chrobhuing L, chrobhoimn F.
20 a choradh F; c taoibh F; d caor F.
21 b sa F; mumhuin F; c agus] et L, 7 F; Doire] F, duire L;
d luighe L, oighe F; fa úr] F, a núir L.

- 22 Tuir na dTuath, an tráth do mhair
a-muigh idir Chloinn gCarrthaigh,
do thuill céim d'Ultaibh uile:
Ultaigh san réim ríoghruidhe.
- 23 Tír Chonuill na gcuradh sean-
ní h-éineire do fhuilngeadh-
is uaisle ríogh fhréimhe Cuirc,
do-níodh le chéile a gcosuint.
- 24 Le cathaibh, le coimhriar sgol,
mar Thír gConuill do chosnodh
Mumha bhinnthe an bhruaigh leabhair,
mar fuair innte a oileamhain.

22 When the pillar of the Tuatha dwelt out among
Clann Charrthaigh he earned distinction for all
Ulstermen: they [remain] in the king-lists.

23 Not [just] one burden did he bear; Tír Chonuill
of the ancient warriors and the honour of the king of
the line of Corc, together he defended them.

24 Like Tír Chonuill, he used defend warm, pleasant
Mumha, of the extensive shore, with battalions and the
maintenance of [poetic] schools, as it was there that
he was reared.

22 a tráith F; b amuich L, amoigh F; chloinn] F, chlainn L;
charrthaigh L, charthaigh F; c thoill F; d réimh LF.

23 a ccupadh F; c fhréimhe] F, réimhe L; ccuirc F;
d do-níodh] F, do ghníodh L.

24 b chonuill F; do chosnodh] F, do chosnomh L.

- 25 Ní díoth óir, ní h-easbhaidh fhuinn,
tug do seachna chlann gConuill,
acht grādh na h-oileamhna air,
lámh réar dhoidheaghla deóraidh.
- 26 Mac Suibhne, dá madh lainn lais,
do thairg Ó Domhnaill Durlais
do ghairm ó dhūthroctoil de,
pailm ó ūrphortoibh Éirne.
- 27 Éamonn, easgcara an ionnmhuis,
níor ghabh sē an slait dtighiornais
a láimh Í Dhomhnuill Doire
do bháidh chormfhuinn Chorcoighe.

25 Hand from which strangers could not escape, it was not lack of gold or land which caused him to stay away from the descendants of Conall but the love he had of his upbringing.

26 Ó Domhnaill very readily offered to proclaim him Mac Suibhne, if that were what he desired, [the] palm-tree from the fair banks of Éirne.

27 Éamonn, enemy of wealth, out of affection for the ale-rich land of Corcaigh he did not accept the rod of sovereignty from the hand of Ó Domhnaill of Doire.

25 a díth LF; heasba L, heasbhuigh F; foinn F; b dhó F; clann F; cchonoill F; d doighdeaghla F.

26 a Suibhne] F, suimhne L; loinn F; c dhuthrochttoil F; ūrportuibh F.

27 a eascara L, easgchara F; ionnmuis F; b slait] F, slat L; c a] ó F; d chormfhoinn F; Chorcoighe] F, chorcoidhe L.

- 28 Grádh Mumhan na maoileann dte,
's gur gealladh dho éag innte,
dob fháth anamhna ón tír thuaidh
don ghríbh adhamhra armruaidh.
- 29 Idir Chloinn gCarrthaigh Chuain Dor
a-tá a fheart i muigh Mhumhan,
acht géarbh athardha an tír thall
do ghríbh chathardha Chualann.
- 30 Acht géar dhúthchas dho an tír thoir
fuair oighidh, ar an eachtsoin,
mac Cumhaill, i muigh Mhumhan,
tuir fhuluing na n-ollumhan.

28 Love of Mumha of the warm hills, and [because] it had been foretold to him that he would die there, was the reason that the superlative, red-weaponed griffin remained away from the northern territory.

29 Even though that territory was the patrimony of the warlike griffin of Cuala, his grave is in the plain of Mumha amongst the Clann Charrthaigh of Cuan Dor.

30 Similarly, though the eastern territory was his native land, Cumhall's son, supporting pillar of the poets, found death in the plain of Mumha.

- 28 a maoileann] F, maoilean L; b do F; c tír] F, ttir L; thuaigh F; d nadhamhra LF; narmruaidh L, narmruaigh F;
29 a Aidir F; chloinn] F, chlainn L; charthoigh F; chuan LF; b moigh F.
30 a dhó F; c mhumhan F.

- 31 Lór dhamhsa dá dhearbhadh sin,
gur bearnadh cairt a chinidh,
flaith fa gleōbhurba ós chionn chreach,
Fionn leōghanda fa Laighneach.
- 32 Acht géar Laighneach Fionn na bhfian,
tuitim i Mumhain Mhaicniadh
dó do bhaoi i ndān fa dheiriodh;
fa draoi an fádh lēar foillseighiodh.
- 33 Ag léim tar an mBric mBladhaigh
fa dheōigh do thuit thiaramhain,
mar nár shaoil idir shíol gCuirc
dob fhíor don draoidh a ndubhuirt.

31 A prince fiercest in battle at the head of raiding parties, Fionn the lion-like was a Leinsterman until the charter of his race was terminated; I require no further proof of that.

32 Even though Fionn of the fian-bands was a Leinsterman, it was fated for him to fall in Maicnia's Mumha; the prophet who revealed it had supernatural power.

33 In the west he finally fell, jumping across the Breac Bhladhach; for he never thought that what the sorcerer said would come true among the race of Corc.

- 31 a dha F; b bhearna F; a] do LF; c gleobhurba] F, gleoghontā L; cionn chreach F; d leoghanta LF; laighneach F.
32 a bhfian] F, bhfiann L; c dho F; d fáidh LF; foillsigeadh F.
33 b dheoigh F; tiaramhuin F; d draoī L, draoigh F.

- 34 Tuitim acht nár thuit le léim,
do bhí, géar Ulltach eiséin,
i ndán don aithFhionn oile
i gclár chlaichfhionn Chorcoighe.
- 35 Fionn oile críche Codhuil
dār dhūthchas clár Conchobhuir;
meisde ar gceart ar clár nDoire
a fheart i gclár Chorcoighe.
- 36 Bíodh nēall daonnachta ar a druim
an ghaoth théid tar uaigh n-Éamuinn;
móide ar súil re magh Mumhan
a char i n-úir Iarmhumhan.

34 Though he was an Ulsterman, the other Fionn was fated to fall in the bright-stoned plain of Corcaigh, though not from a jump did he fall.

35 The other Fionn of the land of Codhal whose patrimony was Conchubhar's plain; we have less claim to the plain of Derry [since] his grave is in the plain of Corcaigh.

36 May a cloud of kindness accompany the wind which passes over Éamonn's grave; the more do we look to Mumha's plain [now that] he is buried in Iarmhumha.

34 d claich-F; chorcoidhe L, corcoidhe F.

35 om. L; a chriche coghuil F; c misde F; d corcoidhe F.

36 a Bithneal F; daonnachta F; droim F; b gaoth F; téid F;
uaigh F; éamuinn LF; c madh F; d chur LF.

- 37 Mac Mhaoil Mhuire mheic Dhonnchaidh,
 fa consul do Chonollchaibh,
 faosamh chean ar gcrú Airtne;
 do gheabh an chlú a chomairci.

Cia a-deir.

37 Son of Maol Muire son of Donnchadh, he was a
 counsellor to the men of Tír Chonaill [and the]
 safeguard of the honours of this our race of Art; fame
 has undertaken to protect him.

37 a m^hic donnchaidh F; c cean F; d clú F; chumairce F.

II Notes

1 b ghairthe Past participle of goiridh. Forms (goirthe also occurs, e.g. TD 3.14c) with palatal -r- are the norm for Classical Verse, e.g. Di. D 68.4b, Aith. D 46.1c, DMU VII. 29b, Poem IX. 1d etc. F's form, with non-palatal -r-, is a later development according to O Rahilly, MD ii, 254.

d I have allowed cé to stand although gé (F) is by far the commoner in Classical Verse; cf. Appendix I. 1a n.

This line is a good example of the predilection of the Classical poet for paradox. However, while the general sense is quite clear, the syntax is open to question. I take ar to be the variant of iar. It is just possible, however, that we are dealing with the simple prep. ar 'in the state of' and that we should read ar teasdúdh 'absent'.

The only verb nouns of teasda(ighidh) listed by IGT are teasdáil and teasbháil (IGT ii.40, iii.10,83). The form teasdógh is found in Poem XI.31b (: brón) and in SVBDL XXVI.4d (: slógh). Other forms are teasbhaidh, teasdadh and teasdughadh (DIL T, 156.3-39, 159.28-9, 72-3).

2 a clú/chlú/bhrú is an example of breacadh fíre, cf. Breacadh 24(a).

b um Bóinn For the absence of lenition here, and in q. 3d infra, see General Introduction: Editorial Principles.

c clú may be either fem. (IGT ii. 98) or masc. (IGT ii. 108) as in F's reading here and in line a.

For the expression cuiridh clú cf. 'sgola ag éud fán cclú chuirid', POR VII. 1b, 'Mór do chuir clú do chinidh', Éigse xiv (1971-2) 36.24a, and DMU, p. 260 s.v. cor 'winning fame'.

Fhorbhuir 'in Thomond' Onom., 427; 'a place or river probably in east or north-east Clare' TD ii, 344.

3 a nar For this interrogative particle see Éigse iii (1941-2) 184.37d n. To the examples cited there add O Rahilly, Gadelica 28.174, 31.174 n; Joynt, Feis Tighe Chonáin line 181.

Cuinn Conn Céadchathach, legendary king of Ireland. As Clann Suibhne were considered to be descended from Niall Naoighiallach - see q. 13 - Éamonn could claim to be Conn's descendant, Conn being Niall's direct ancestor through six generations; cf. Corp. Gen., 147.

b airrdheana is éachta Qq. 4 and 5 respectively will treat of these.

c Chruachuin Cruacha(in) (cf. EIHM, 26 n. 2), traditional power-centre of Connacht. Present-day Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon. For recent accounts see B. Wailes, 'The Irish 'Royal Sites' in history and archaeology' in CMCS iii (Summer, 1982) 1-29; M. Herity, 'A survey of the royal sites of Cruachain in Connacht ...' in RSAIJn. cxiii(1983) 121-42, cxiv(1984) 125-38; J. Waddell, 'Rathcroghan - a royal site in Connacht' in The journal of Irish archaeology i(1983) 21-46.

d Teamhrach Teamhair (Eng. Tara), perhaps the best known of the royal sites of Ireland. For recent

accounts see D. L. Swan, 'The Hill of Tara, county Meath: the evidence of ^earial photography' in RSAILJn. cviii(1978) 51-66 and B. Wailes, loc. cit.

4 c According to Breacadh 57 et. seq., the caoiche between dáil in a and dáil in c is obviated by the presence of breaccadh fíre patrúin (ou/uu/ou, cf. Breacadh 37) in cd.

For non-lenition of tonna see General Introduction: Editorial Principles. The form tonna is proscribed twice by IGT ii.2, tunna being the preferred form. Yet tonna is fixed by metre here, no form *urra being attested for 3 pl. of ar. Other examples where the form tonna is metrically necessary are DiD 91.53cd (:longa), 81.15cd (:orra) and cf. example cited Dán na mB. M ii, 415 s.v. tonna; cf. also Poem X.25c n.

d The reasoning in this line seems to be that Eamonn's death constitutes only a temporary setback to the permanent memory of his airrdheana.

fuil and foil are the permitted forms for pres. 3sg. dep. of a-tá (IGT iii. 7), the former being required here for perfect rime. For F's reading, showing eclipsis after ní, cf. Irish dialects, 44-6, and Carney and Greene, Celtic Studies, 72-5.

5 c Chobhthaigh Cobhthach Coel Breg, king of Breagha, see, for example 'Orgain Denna Ríg', passim, in Greene (ed.) Fingal Ronáin and other stories. Cró Cobhthaigh probably signifies Ireland here, cf. Aith. D 16.25d. When specific families are intended, one would expect the reference to be to a Leinster family such as the Uí Bhroin, e.g. L. Branach 25.4c. But we

also find Cobhthach mentioned in relation to the Méig Shamhradháin of Co. Cavan, Magauran V. 9d, and, possibly, to the Uí Neill, see DMU XIX. 30d and *ibid*, p. 248n.

d dá gcuimhne I take this to mean that Éamonn's éachta not only secured his own immortality but that of Fine Suibhne in general also.

a gConallchuibh might also be read here. This is the first mention of the connection between Éamonn and Tír Chonaill which pervails throughout the poem and which I have discussed in the Introduction.

6 a Ionnamhail and Ionnshamhail appear as free variants of each other in Classical Verse. This is not surprising as both are identical in metrical terms, e.g. TD 1.15c and DiD 81.8c. For possible confusion between subst. ionn(sh)amhail and adj. ionnamhail see DIL I, 276. 84-5, 287.7-11.

b Lenition of bhrisde is an example of sléagar. For the regular lenition after bhrisde see BST 226.19ff.

bhearn (MSS bhearnadh) This line is hypermetric in the manuscripts; bearn (IGT ii.39) is a variant of bearna (IGT ii.4).

c F's reading is preferred here as it makes better sense than L's; chrann is the more metrically correct.

The expression cró sleagh etc. is commonly taken as a kenning for battle; e.g. Magauran XXXII. 24b, O Hara XVI. 30d, POR XIX. 21b, DMU IV. 16a, Di. D 117.24c, ISP, p. 23.1c. Alternatively, I feel that it might also refer to the botha, or temporary dwellings,

used while on campaign and sometimes constructed with spears, see Poem XII. 10n.

d An alternative translation might read: 'The likeness of Fionn mac Cumhaill Éamonn surpassed his [sc. Fionn's] fame'.

7 b Míl(idh) Easbáine, from whose three sons the Gaoidhil were said to be descended.

c Almhain, n. sg. Almha, the hill of Allen, Co. Kildare, said to have been Fionn's main headquarters: 'Is ann imorro is mó ro buí airisim Finn a nAlmuin Laigen', SG i, 90.

d 'Fuil Fhéilim' etc. is a common synonym in this verse for the Irish, e.g. TD 10.4d, POR IV. 7b, as is 'fód Féilim' etc. for Ireland itself, e.g. TD 15.9d, Butlers IV. 4a. IGT ii.112 gives the forms Féidhlimidh, Féilimidh, Féidhlim, Féilim, Feidhlimidh and Feidhlim; cf. also Fheilim: inbheirfhinn, L. Branach 53.1ab. There is nothing to suggest that these forms were not free variants of each other; thus, for instance, in 'Gabh umad a Fhéidhlimidh'¹ we find Féidhlimidh and Féilim freely applied to the same person, according to the requirements of the metre.

It is likely that the Féilim in question is a conflation of two, or possibly three, characters. (i) Éllim, later Éilim (EIHM, 154), legendary king of Ireland who ruled for twenty years before being slain by Tuathal Techtmar, Corp. Gen., 121.

1 M. Dillon, 'The inauguration of O'Connor, in Watt, et. al., Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn, (186-202) 191-6.

(ii) Fedelmid Rechtaid, son of Tuathal Techtmar and father of Conn Céadchathach. (iii) Fedelmid mac Crimthainn who AI, 128, tells us became 'lánrí hÉrend' in A.D. 838 when the king of Tara, Niall Caille, submitted to him. Professor Binchy has remarked that 'he was beyond all doubt the most powerful monarch in the Ireland of his day'.²

The lenition after gen. sg. fola is irregular. This could be rectified by reading fola Féilim with 'sléagar' of fola. See, however, q. 13c infra.

8 a Ursa, orsa, lit. 'door-post' has a number of figurative usages: see DIL A, 237. 19ff. For a different idiom involving this word and the preposition i see O Hara, 387 n. 2023, DMU XIV. 2a.

ris is the usual form of re when used before the article, BST 195.25; but cf., *ibid*, 29a. 13: 'roimh an bhfear .l. res an bhfear as .c. ann'.

an taobh thoir can mean 'the east [of Ireland]' as in q. 30a, infra and Poem V. 57c, or it can refer to England as it seems to here; cf. an tír thoir TD 17. 10c.

b For gi bé/gidh bé see Ériu xii (1938) 208-11, TD, p. lxxvii.

c It is interesting to note that two other poets refer to oighreacht Fhinn in poems to members of Clann Suibhne, though the Fionn comparison is not sustained in either poem, see RIA MS 24 P 25, ff. 73r. b., 74r. a.

2 Ó Cuív (ed.), The impact of the Scandinavian invasions on the Celtic speaking peoples, 129.

d For lámh in the sense given here see DIL L, 36. 65-84, and q. 17d *infra*.

9 b Qq. 10-15 will show how Éamonn is not only Fionn's equal, but his superior do bhreith sgríbhionn.

10 a mac Mhaoil Mhuire I have allowed the lenition here, and in qq. 11a, 37a, after mac, shown in both manuscripts, to stand as in these instances it can be regarded as sléagar. There is evidence for this feature in non-sléagar situations: see TD, pp. ci-cii, Di. D, 584 s.v. mac.

b The lenition after gen. pl. sgol is grammatically irregular but metrically necessary. Two explanations may be given. (i) This may be an example of the absence of eclipsis after a gen pl. preceding a proper name, taking fód Iúghoine together as such a name, noted TD, pp. ciii, cv. (ii) According to the evidence of McKenna, BST, 267-8, the 'rule' concerning the lenition of words such as clár, fód etc. in gen. sg. preceding a proper name, holds true even in non-sléagar situations; cf. 'moludh gruadh chraoibhe Céise' Magauran XVI. 37d, though this example is inconclusive. For other possible instances from the poems edited here cf. (?)q. 23c *infra*, and Poems IV. 78c, V. 34c, 71c, XII. 17b, 49a, 58c, IX. 6a; cf., also, MacCM, 277, 17c n.

Iúghoine Úgaine or Augaine Már, father of Cobhthach Coel (q. 5c); see Ét. Celt. xviii (1981) 143. Fód Iúghoine signifies Ireland.

c san (sa L) is the only form of the two given in BST (192.1): 'san bhaile agus is in bhaile', but sa

is also attested in the poetry, e.g. DMU V. 6c.

buannacht This was the practice whereby a ruler ensured the maintenance of his hired soldiery by billeting them on the people of his territory. One so billeted was a buanna (q. 11c) which word was practically synonymous with gallóglach, save where the hired soldier was not of gallóglach stock. See E. MacNeill, 'Military service in Medieval Ireland' in Cork Hist. Soc. Jn. xlvii (1941) 6-15; Scots. Merc., 37-40, 358-9. For the general practice of billeting a chief's retinue on the inhabitants of a territory see pp. 82-6 of K. Simms, 'Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland' in RSAIJn. cviii (1978) 67-100.

d Dá Thí Probably to be identified with Nath-í (Dath-í) successor to Niall Naoighiallach in the kingship of Ireland, Corp. Gen., 122, 124, though this succession was refuted by O Rahilly, EIHM, 211ff. Knott, TD ii, 335, questioned whether Dá Thí derived from Nath-í. The first element is unstressed. 'Nuaghorth Dá Thí' is a name for Ireland.

11 a Suimhne (L) Confusion of bh and mh is a feature of the writing of Seán na Ráithíneach, see Ó Cuív, Párliaiment na mban, 152.

b For cloch chúil cf. Poem VIII. 40d and Di. D 110. 1b. I interpret 'cloch' in its extended sense of 'fortification', cf. POR XIII. 14d, DMU XXI. 2d, 37a, and DIL C, 248.70-85.

Modhuirne The river Modharn (Eng. Mourne) rises south of Omagh, flows north-west and joins the Finn at Strabane. It can be used in its localised sense in poems to Ó Néill, TD 8.19d, or Ó Domhnaill, Mac CM X. 22a, 23b; in a wider application it is employed to

signify Ireland, as in TD 9.38b or DiD 74.63d.

d ráith Raoilinn A name for Ireland. See O Rahilly's substantial note on same, MD i, 115.

12 a Alternatively, but less likely, one might translate: 'If he were as the race of Niall were'.

b Niall Naoighiallach, king of Ireland 380-405 A.D. and eponymous ancestor of the Uí Neill. The sobriquet refers to his taking five hostages from Ireland and four from Scotland prior to being slain by Eochaidh mac Énna Ceinselaig, Corp. Gen., 122, EIHM, 209ff.

According to the genealogists Clann Suibhne were descended through one Aodh Athlamhan mac Fhlaitbhertaigh (+1033 AFM, AU) from Eoghan mac Néill Naoighiallaigh; cf. LCS, 1, 81; Ó Donnchadha (ed.), An leabhar Muimhneach, 257; Foras Feasa i, 26; Harrison, An chrosántacht, 103; BAR i, 6. In his poem to Eoghan Óg Mac Suibhne na dTuath, beginning 'Iad fein chinneas ar chloinn Néill' (TD 26) Tadhg Dall explains how Clann Suibhne came to be associated with Cinéal Conaill rather than Cinéal Eoghain.

d uama The notion of the unity of the country and a ruler's responsibilities thereto is one which is well established in Irish tradition; see P. Mac Cana, 'Early Irish ideology and the concept of unity', in Kearney (ed.), The Irish mind, 56-78. In common with the poets of this period (e.g. O Hara XVIII. 35d, Di. D 94. 11d) Fearghal Óg makes frequent reference to this concept, e.g. Di. D 93. 24c, 25c, POR XIX. 14c, DMU IV. 12b, and, in the present collection, cf. Poems VI. 21c, IX. 53c and XII. 5d.

Uisnigh, n. sg. Uisneach, in Co. Westmeath. See Wailes, loc. cit., (where it is placed in Co. Roscommon). Reputed to mark the centre of Ireland (EIHM, 171), the Dál Uisneach, an assembly to celebrate the festival of Bealtaine, was held here; see Mac Neill, The festival of Lughnasa, 327. Commonly used as a name for Ireland.

13 b This is a reference to the sixteen kings of Ireland said to have been descended from Eoghan mac Néill. This seanchas is preserved in the poem beginning 'Sé rí^g déc Eógain anall', Corp. Gen., 126, and later versions, cf. Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 63, RC xxiv (1903) 202 = SGi, 330. Fearghal Óg makes another reference to this in his poem to Toirdhealbhach Luineach, LCAB IX, lines 89-90.

c L's reading is much more preferable to F's here.

The lenition in fhuile after gen. sg. fem. uama is irregular and cannot be caused by saithe which is a masculine noun. IGT ii. 149 declares that uaim has a canamhain form - perhaps of masculine gender? Cf. Poem IV. 5c n.

14 a For early examples of eclipsis after gach see Mesca Ulad, xxxi.

b do-gheibheadh (imperf. indic. 3sg., IGT iii. 22)... dá madh: this mixture of indicative and subjunctive is common in the language of this period, cf. Thomson (ed.), Foirm na n-urrnuidheadh, lvi-lvii.

na bhfáidhghníomh This refers to Fionn's

well-documented gift of prophecy, performed by chewing on his thumb, e.g. RC v (1881-3) 201, and Appendix III A, n. 19.

15 a Dlighidh (Dlighid F) When the subject of a verb was a collective noun, the verb could be either singular or plural; cf. BST 192.13-14.

We could also read sin:faoithibh, the latter cited as a variant of fúthuibh BST 193. 25.

b Tradition depicts Fionn's fian as a somewhat uneasy coalition between two rival families, Clann Mhorna and Clann Bhaoisgne. Baoisgne was a near ancestor of Fionn, see Appendix III. For Baoisgne in fianaíocht tradition see references, DF iii, 345.

c feólfhuil A dvandva compound; cf. Éigse xv (1973-4) 161.

16 a Uaisle is a feminine noun (IGT iv 45), thus absence of lenition on síol is an instance of sleagar. I take síol to be gen. pl. though we might emend to the more usual gen. sg. while still retaining correct alliteration by inferring eclipsis on Suibhne: see Aith. D. ii, 323 s. v. síol and TD, p. civ, ii, 204.3 n. It is possible that a pun is intended here; uaisle may also mean the bounty paid by his employer to a 'buanna', cf. DIL U, 18.8-17.

b suil The form sul is proscribed by BST 238.9 although it occurs quite frequently in manuscripts; cf. DMU IX.31d, Di. D 101.2a. Suil normally lenites (BST 227.13-14) but for non-lenition of t- after -l see General Introduction: Editorial Principles; cf.

suil tarla TD 24.33d.

c chnuaisghil F's reading appears to make better sense than L's chuais-, 'of bright caves'. Cuinn is the correct gen. sg. form of Conn (IGT ii. 67).

17 a For a rhetorical move similar to this cf. Aith. D 44.28 and Poem V. 47a.

Though both manuscripts read 'bhfuil', lenited f- is required for alliteration. 'Fuil' is probably being used in its collective sense here, as a synonym of síol, fine etc.; hence 3rd pl. pronoun is line c.

c Caoiche in uaisle: uaisle here?

18 a F's reading is preferable here as L's wants a syllable.

c fearthain This figurative use of fearthain (IGT ii. 149) seems reasonable enough, though I have not found a comparable example elsewhere. It is tempting to emend to fearann, 'land gained through honour' (unattested elsewhere) on the analogy of such terms as 'fearann cloidhimh', 'fearann gaisgidh', 'fearann pósda' etc.

19 d The translation here is tentative. I take the crobhuig to refer to crú Chuinn; gach cnú = 'every honour' (?); d'aoinfhiodh = iarthar Éireann (?) A less torturous translation would be 'every nut of the cluster comes from a single wood' but the

significance of this eludes me. I have retained L's reading, -fhi(o)dh as it accords with the other figurative elements in the line. However F's -fheadh might be taken, on analogy with 'd'éanláimh', 'd'aonaonta', 'i n-aoinfheacht' etc., to mean 'simultaneously'.

20 a Ceann Coradh (Eng. Kincora) headquarters of Brian Bóroimhe, cf. Forus Feasa iii, 226. The site is now occupied by Killaloe, Co. Clare; see Onom., 224 and Newman, Brian Boru King of Ireland, 54-7. This line suggests that Éamonn saw some service with the Earl of Thomond.

b The spelling -mhomhan in L is simply an instance of a fairly common scribal practice of altering vowels in unstressed syllables to make them identical with the corresponding vowels in the word with which they rime.

c The form gleannta here and in line b is an anomalous form - 'ó chanamhain' - of n. pl. of gleann, otherwise gleanna (IGT ii. 66); cf. Celtica x (1973) 128. gleannta/maoithghleannta/aoincheardcha is an example of 'breachadh fíre', see Breacadh, 24(d), 27.(v), (viii).

d This expression appears proverbial or, at least, idiomatic. For the significance of the line see the Introduction to this poem.

Ceardcha is one of those words with non-dental inflexion included under a dental paradigm (IGT ii. 7); cf., also, IGT ii. 4. In each case provision is made for non-inflected words.

taobh thall possibly refers to Carbery here.

21 a Na Tuatha Tuatha Toraighe, see Introduction.

c I interpret this quatrain as meaning that Éamonn enhanced the reputation of his own family and of those of Tír Chonaill in general. We might also see Doire (Eng. Derry) and Dún na nGall (Eng. Donegal town) as suggesting Clann Suibhne Fánad and Clann Suibhne Baghuineach respectively - these being the most noteworthy areas in closest proximity to those territories - and thus referring to Clann Suibhne in general.

d L's reading lacks a syllable here; luighe, permitted variant of loighe (IGT ii. 2, iii. 74), and úr (IGT ii. 96) variant of úir (IGT ii. 14), are required for perfect rime.

22 d Translation tentative here.

23 a Tír Chonaill Present-day Co. Donegal. na gcuradh F's reading here is also quite plausible, cf. Poem VIII. 36b.

c ríogh may also be gen. pl. for lenition after which see q. 10b n. Taking it as gen. sg. (see Poem IV. 5c n.) the reference may be to Mac Carthaigh Riabhach (see Introduction) which chief, at the time, was Eoghan mac Domhnaill mheic Fhinghin who was head of his family 1576-93.

d Cuirc Conall Corc mac Luigthig/Luigdeach, founder and first king of Cashel and ancestor of Eoghanacht Chaisil; Corp. Gen., 362. See M. Dillon,

'The story of the finding of Cashel', in Ériu xvi (1952) 61-73, and D. Sproule, 'Politics and pure narrative in the stories about Corc of Cashel' in Ériu xxxvi (1985) 11-28.

24 a Or, perhaps, 'with battles'. As is usual in this type of verse, military achievements and liberality are put on equal footing. The primary function of coimh- seems to be alliterative here and I have left it untranslated.

b Sense might be made of L's reading (do chosnomh) thus: 'like the defence of Tír Chonail [was that of] Mumha' but this seems rather desperate. On the other hand 3rd sg. past imperfect - which could also be L's reading with common -mh# for -dh# - suits well and is preferable to a possible past impersonal reading as it accords with the 3rd sg. vb. in line d.

c Mumha This nom. sg. might support an impersonal reading in line b (IGT v. 18) but it can be explained as an instance of 'cosg réime' due to the accompanying genitive; see Éigse iii (1941) 60-61, IGT i. 82.

25 c I am uncertain as to the correct interpretation of this line. grádh might mean 'grade', in a loose sense, 'but [because] he was at the stage of being reared' (oileamhuin may also mean fosterage but it should be clear from the Introduction that this does not apply here) but I think this unlikely. The word must therefore mean 'love, affection', as in q. 28a, *infra*, and the only

interpretation which I can offer is, as in q. 28, that it is the love for his surroundings which Éamonn's upbringing inspired in him.

The use of the preposition ar is problematic, however, in that its combination with grádh normally signifies the object or recipient of the love; cf. DIL G, 142.77-8, Di. D 27A. 15c, Aith. D 11.11b.

d In Classical Verse, deóra(dh) frequently refers to a visiting poet, see Poem VII. 25ab n.; it may also refer to foreign or alien soldiery, Magauran XXXII. 6c, O Hara IX. 42d. I therefore believe that this line contains, in a neat ambiguity, both elements of 'bardic' panegyric mentioned in q. 24a, supra. Neither friend nor foe escapes him, the former due to his liberality, the latter because of his military prowess.

26 For discussion of this quatrain see Introduction.

b Durlais (nom. Durlas). The reference is to Durlas Guaire, seat of the legendary king of Connacht renowned for his hospitality; see Joynt, Tromdámh Guaire, passim and Poem V. 19d n.; cf. POR XXXVI. 56, TD 5.8d, 6.3a.

d pailm may refer either to Éamonn or to Ó Domhnaill. In my translation I take it as the former.

The Éirne (English, Erne) flows from a lake of the same name into Donegal Bay at Ballyshannon and marks the southern boundary of Tír Chonaill. One source mentions it as one of the four most noble rivers in Ulster: LCAB, 51.

27 a The subject of a praise-poem in Classical Verse is frequently praised for his/her almost reckless distribution of wealth, e.g. DMU I. 26a, VII. 30a, POR III passim. Hence the present conceit suggesting that Éamonn's generosity amounted to a hatred for personal wealth. His liberality was also noted by the 'Four Masters' in recording his obit, see Introduction.

b The slat tighiornais (slat na ríge TD 20. 42a, slat shealbha POR VII. 8c) was the ceremonial rod given to the taoiseach on the occasion of his inauguration; see Foras Feasa iii, 10-12, UJA xxxiii (1970) 94 n. 41.

28 a maoileann is the form given in IGT ii.12.

b It is, of course, impossible to verify the claim made in this line. It may simply be a case of poetic licence, such a claim being required to cement the second stage of the parallel with Fionn to which this quatrain is a prologue. In view of that, innte probably refers to the tír thuaidh.

d I have removed MSS eclipsis following prepositions do, in this line, and ó in the previous one as one would expect dat. sg. to follow in both instances; cf. q. 29d.

29 a Chuaín (nom. Cuan) Dor Glandore, in East ~~Cairney~~. For the possible significance of this see Introduction. The difference in usage between Cuan Dor and Dor on its own has been noted in DMU, 248 line 2209 n.

c acht fulfills merely an emphasising function here, cf. BST, p. 213; such phrases are usually rendered 'even though', cf. DIL A, 21. 22-32, Éigse xxi (1986) 51, 17c. n.

an tír thall presumably means Tír Chonaill here.

d Chualann (nom. Cuala) a territory in Leinster extending from Arklow to the Liffey; Onom., 313, EIHM, 25-7. In Top. poems, 127, Professor Carney suggests a Cuala in Co. Kerry also. It may occur, in a specific sense, with reference to Leinster as in L. Branach, line 6081 and Mac C M VI. 15b; more frequently, as here, it simply signifies Ireland, cf. Poems IV. 11b, VII. 13c, XII. 4b, 18d, 40b.

30 b ar an eachtsoin There are a number of possibilities with this reading. It might be read as éacht, 'performing that deed of prowess', referring forward to Fionn's 'léim' in q. 33; it might also be the word (f)eacht, 'on that occasion' or 'on that expedition', again with a proleptic function.

However, I prefer to regard it as eacht (IGT ii. 95) the primary sense of which is 'condition, stipulation' etc., see DIL E, 32.32-45. It retains this sense in the common phrase 'ar eacht', e. g. Aith. D 31. 15c, TBg 9712-3, Scáthán 2670; but it may also show an extension of the primary sense: 'because' e. g. ar eacht do bhí [a] buime bocht Di. D 3.14b, 'similarly' ar an n-eachd ccédna Teag. Críosa. 1813, 'thus/therefore' ar an eachtsoin Poem VIII. 35b. It is in this extended sense that I interpret the phrase in the present instance.

31 c gleōbhurba On balance I feel that F's reading is best here. That of L gives a picture of Fionn bearing his wounds at the head of raiding parties, which is plausible enough; but the second element may have been influenced by MS 'leoghanta' in d. F's -bhurba, superlative of borb (cf. DMU XVIII. 21d), is more straightforward but necessitates emending leoghanta to leōghanda for perfect rime.

d In Appendix III, I give a list of Fionn's genealogies. There are two categories: those giving him a Leinster origin, and those connecting him with Munster. Within these categories there is quite a deal of variation. The oldest and most frequently attested is that tracing Fionn back, through five generations, to the Leinster deity Nuadu Necht¹, though Mac Neill considered that tracing him to the Uí Tairrsigh to be the most 'genuine'.²

There can be little doubt that the weight of literary tradition was almost unanimously behind the Leinster origin of Fionn - this was the one endorsed by Céitinn³ - two of the locations cited being Teamhair Mairci⁴ and Ard na hAlmaine⁵. As Fearghal Óg's purpose here is to continue and cement the comparison between Éamonn and Fionn, by appealing to this tradition he avoids getting involved in unnecessary genealogical argument.

1 For commentary see Meyer, Fianaigecht, pp. xvii-xviii; DF i, pp. lii ff., DF iii, p. lv, EIHM, 274 ff. Fionn's pedigrees occurring in printed sources are set out in detail by R. M. Scowcroft, The hand and the child: studies of Celtic tradition in European literature, Unpublished Ph D Thesis (Cornell, 1982) ii, 673-87.

2 DF i, pp. liii - liv.

3 Foras Feasa i, 48.

4 LU, lines 3187-94 (=RC ii (1873-5) 90). This is north-west of Carlow, Onom., 604, 630.

5 'Book of Lismore', f. 198r. b.

32 For a complete discussion of the meaning and significance of this and the following quatrain see Appendix III A.

b Mhaicniadh Maicnia mac Meic Con of the Corco Loígde, see Jackson (ed.) Cath Maighe Léna, 85; Corp. Gen., 256. Hence 'Magh (Fód etc.) Maicniadh' as a name for Munster; e.g. DMU XIX. 3d, Top. poems, line 1586.

d fádh (IGT ii. 38) is a permitted variant of MSS fáidh (IGT ii. 12) and is required here for perfect rime.

33 b thiaramhain Examples of this suffix -(amh)ain joined to adverbs of direction are cited MD ii, 238 s. v. A-bhusain; cf., also, túaidemain DIL T, 335.1-5, thoireamhain Di. D 109. 15c, suas-ain Di. D 35. 13b, thiarain Poem XII. 55a, thuasamhain Poem XI. 6b, 9a.

c We might also translate 'for no-one among the race of Corc considered what the sorcerer said to be true'.

d draoidh is the correct dat. sg. of draoi (IGT ii. 85).

34 a The play between the primary ('falls') and extended ('dies') sense of tuitidh, present in the previous two quatrains, is brought to its conclusion here.

c oile is superfluous to the meaning of the

line and I have not translated it.

35 a I have removed the lenition on críche as it is ungrammatical - it is not an instance of 'sléagar' - and is probably caused by the vowel termination of the preceding word.

Codhuil (nom. sg. Codhal) apparently = Beann Codhail 'Ireland's Eye', a small island north of Howth Head, Onom., 279; a name for Ireland, TD 9.40c, POR XXII. 19a, Mac C M VIII. 20a.

b Conchubhair Conchubhar mac Neasa, king of the Ulaid in the Ulster Cycle; 'clár Conchubhair' is thus a name for Ulster.

meisde (MS misde) is the correct form in Classical E Mod. Irish; cf. Aith. D 33. 6c (:meisge), BST 1 bb. 7, Poem V. 60c.

This line and q. 36c compliment each other.

d 'Breacadh fíre' here in clár: clár: gclár, see Breacadh, 24(b), 25(v)-(x).

36 a Bíodh F's reading would also be acceptable here, either as bí[o]th 3rd sg. imperative, or as the compound bithnéal - néal and néall being permitted variants (IGT ii. 75 v.l.) - cf. biothmharaidh q. 2c, supra. In any case I find this a particularly moving quatrain.

c There appears to be 'breacadh fíre' in this leathrann which contains two rinn (magh, char) and one airdrinn (Mumhan); cf. Breacadh, 24(c), 26.

d This line suggests that Éamonn was buried,

not in Carbery, but in the territory of either Mac Carthaigh Mór or the Fitzgeralds of Desmond.

car, a permitted variant of MSS cur (IGT ii. 69, iii. 58), is necessary for rime.

37 b connsul 'Counsellor' seems to be the most likely meaning of this word in the context, though the possibility that it denotes some more official title cannot be dismissed; see DIL C, 459. 47-54, and Risdeard Pluincéad's Vocabularium, Marsh's Library MS Z4. 2. 5, f. 101 v. b s.v. Consul.

c I allow MSS faosamh to stand although faoiseamh is the only form cited at IGT ii. 28. faosamh is not involved in the rime here and is attested both in the early language, where it appears to be the older form (DIL F, 14.54ff) and in the E. Mod. language; e.g. Di. D 39.23 b, Aith. D 73. 1a, T Bg, line 2716, Desid., line 3687, Parrthas, line 5821.

Lenition on cean is an example of 'sléagar'.

Airtni Art Aoinfhear son of Conn Céadchathach, father of Cormac mac Airt, ancestor of Niall Naoighiallach; cf. Corp. Gen., 130 -1. Most of the northern families claimed descent from Conn Céadchathach.

POEM III

BOND

SAME 1 BLOOD

Introduction

The following poem is addressed to Domhnall Mac Suibhne Fánad. He became chief of his name¹ in 1570 following the slaying, in the presence of Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill, of Domhnall's brother and predecessor, Toirdhealbhach Óg, and a second brother Aodh Buidhe Ruadh, at the hands of Mac Domhnaill gallóglaigh. This information is given by the 'Four Masters' whose entry reads:

Mac Suibhne Fánat .i. Toirrdhealbhach Ócc mac Toirrdhealbhaigh mac Maolmuire et a bhrathair Aodh Buidhe Rúadh et Mac Suibhne na tTuath, Murchadh Mall mac Eocchain Óicc do mharbhadh i nDún na Long hi ffiull hi ffiadhnaisi Í Neill (Toirrdhealbhach Luineach) lá Cloinn nDomhnaill gallócclach.... A [sc. Mac Suibhne na dTuath] bhrathair Eocchan Ócc do ghabhail a ionaidh 7 a bhrathair Domhnall dóirndneadh i nionadh Mheic Suibhne Fánatt.²

Clann Suibhne Fánad were the senior branch of Clann Suibhne in Ireland.³ They provided gallóglaigh for the Uí Dhomhnaill, an arrangement which dated from the late 14th century, when Toirdhealbhach Caoch Mac

1 The Uí Dhomhnaill and Clann Suibhne Fánad shared an inauguration site at Cill mac nEnáin (angl. Cilmacrenan); see LCS, 70-72 and cf. BAR, 38, UJA v (1857) 232-3, Misc. Celt. Soc., 267. For the extent of the territory of Fánad see UJA xiv (1908) 80.

2 AFM v, 1637.

3 See LCS, pp. xx-xxxiii; Scots Merc., 31-2; Poem II, Introduction.

Suibhne (+ 1399) was head of his family.⁴ In Domhnall's time we are told that the 'bonnought of three gallowlasses which O'Donnell imposeth to the use of the three Mc Swines viz. Fanad Banagh and Mac Swyne [Doe]... amounteth at the least to 2,000 beoves [sic] per annum'.⁵ It appears that Domhnall remained loyal in his service to Ó Domhnaill until just before the flight. In 1592 Mac Suibhne Fánad was present at the inauguration of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill in Cilmacrenan⁶ and, seven years later, he was numbered among those who assembled at Ballymote with Ó Domhnaill in preparation for his famous raid into Thomond.⁷

All the poems addressed to Domhnall in that part of RIA MS 24 P 25 which constitutes the Mac Suibhne duanaire - ff. 72v - 81v - seem to reflect a period when Mac Suibhne Fánad was at the height of his career, that is from his inauguration in 1570 to his dispossession in 1601. Maol Muire Mac Suibhne na dTuath had submitted to the English, however briefly, in 1599 and plans were being made in that year to have not only his own lands regranted to him, but also those of Mac Suibhne Baghuineach and Mac Suibhne Fánad 'until true advertisements are received of the loyalty of the pretended inheritors of those countries'.⁸

In early 1601 Sir Henry Docwra believed that

4 LCS, 44, see further q. 9cd n., *infra*. Their service to Ó Domhnaill was not exclusive. For instance, members of Clann Suibhne Fánad served under Mág Uidhir, June - October 1593: Cal. SP Ire. 1592 - 1596, 105, 169.

5 Cal. Carew MSS 1589 - 1600, 202.

6 BARI, 38; AFM vi, 1928.

7 BARI, 199; AFM vi, 2099.

8 Cal. SP Ire. 1599 - 1600, 254; Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 17), 122:6391.

Mac Suibhne Fánad might 'come in'⁹, but in March of that year he decided to seize Mac Suibhne's house at Rathmullan.¹⁰ Docwra was conscious of the strategic importance of Rathmullan for the control of the adjoining territory and of Lough Swilly, but he had also grown impatient with Mac Suibhne Fánad. In April 1601 he wrote of him as being one 'to whom I bear some little grudge for that he had long together entertained speeches with me of coming in and still deferred it to Neal Garve's arrival. For I hold it in some sort dishonourable that his obedience and duty to Her Majesty should depend upon the favour or confidence of any other man'.¹¹ In securing Rathmullan, Docwra satisfied himself that Fánad was 'bound and not able to escape' and 'thoroughly quieted'.¹²

Meanwhile, Niall Garbh Ó Domhnaill, being in opposition to Ó Domhnaill¹³ and having thrown in his lot with Docwra as a means of attaining the leadership of his people, had taken Mac Suibhne's pledges only to be relieved of them again by Aodh Ruadh.¹⁴ However, in June 1601, Mac Suibhne and his son, Domhnall Gorm, submitted to Docwra¹⁵, Domhnall Gorm requesting that

9 Cal. SP Ire. 1600 - 1601, 190. He had already been pardoned in 1586, Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 15), 167:4914.

10 See q. 10a n., *infra*.

11 Cal. SP Ire. 1600 - 1601, 285-6; for further evidence of Mac Suibhne's reliance on Niall Garbh see Cal. SP Ire. 1601 - 1603, 262 and AFM vi, 2338.

12 Cal. SP Ire. 1600 - 1601, 288, 192.

13 A legacy of his father's, see Poem IV Introduction.

14 Cal. SP Ire. 1600 - 1601, 289, 325.

15 Ó Dochartaigh was the intermediary on this occasion, Misc. Celt. Soc., 250.

he be made Mac Suibhne on the death of his father.¹⁶

The submission was only temporary. As soon as Docwra withdrew to Lifford, Mac Suibhne took forty of the English garrison at Rathmullan, on the pretext of raiding Mac Suibhne na dTuath, and, somewhere near Derry, he turned on them, forcing them to take refuge in a church where they shortly afterwards surrendered.¹⁷ Docwra's revenge was swift: he hanged Mac Suibhne's pledges and wasted his territory. In September Domhnall wrote to the Lord Deputy, Mountjoy, seeking to return to his country and asking 'to be received into friendship on fair terms'.¹⁸

There is little reference to Mac Suibhne Fánad in the sources between the years 1601 and 1607.¹⁹ Shortly before he left from Rathmullan, Rudhraighe, Earl of Tír Chonaill, complained to James I that the three Mac Suibhnes and Ó Baoighill, under instructions from the Lord Deputy, no longer paid him the rents which were his due.²⁰ The arrangement which, in the case of Mac Suibhne Fánad, had lasted for some two hundred years had come to an end. In

16 Cal. SP Ire. 1600 - 1601, 376-7. For Domhnall Gorm see LCS, pp. xxxi-xxxiii. Accounts differ as to whether it was Mac Suibhne Fánad or Domhnall Gorm who was captured with Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnall in September 1587, see BARI, 8, ii, 208.4. Aodh Ruadh's father, Aodh Dubh, had previously undertaken to send his other son, Rudhraighe, and the eldest sons of Mac Suibhne Fánad and Mac Suibhne na dTuath as pledges to Dublin: Cal. Carew MSS 1575 - 1588, 444-5, Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 15), 165:4906.

17 Cal. S.P. Ire., 1601 - 1603, 21. Docwra attributed this rebellion to 'the hope of foreign aid', *ibid*, p. 45.

18 *Ibid*, 68.

19 He was not at Kinsale in 1601; see Walsh, Irish chiefs and leaders, 192. He submitted to the English in 1603; AFM vi, 2338.

20 Cal. SP Ire. 1606 - 1608, 373; included in his list of grievances is one (*ibid*, p. 374) complaining of Donell Gorme McSwyne taking hawks from him to send to the Lord Deputy.

1607, about ten days before Christmas, twenty three jurors, under the chairmanship of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, gathered at Lifford to convict the Earls of Tír Chonaill and Tír Eoghain, who had departed four months earlier, of conspiracy and treason. Among the jurors was one Donel McSwyne Fanet.²¹

Domhnall and Fánad in general seem to have suffered more than most during the revolt of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, April-July 1608²² and, despite being implicated by the Inghean Dubh,²³ it is extremely unlikely that Mac Suibhne sided with Ó Dochartaigh. That he retained some of his old rebelliousness, however, is suggested by an account of his appearance as a justice of peace at sessions held at Lifford in 1609 when Mac Suibhne Baghuineach was acquitted of raiding Killybegs. Mac Suibhne Fánad, we are told, came 'in an uncivil manner in his mantle'.²⁴

In q. 10a n., *infra*, I mention the grant of 2,000 acres received by Mac Suibhne Fánad in the Ulster Plantation. A similar grant was made to Ó Baoighill and the two other Mac Suibhnes. Initially such a grant was thought undesirable but necessary. The Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester wrote in 1608: 'they are for the most part unworthy of what they

21 Ibid, 555-6. The following day another session was held across the river in Strabane. However, Fr. Walsh, The flight of the earls by Tadhg Ó Cianáin, 9. n5, is incorrect in saying that Mac Suibhne was present at this also. This court was concerned only with convicting the Earl of Tír Eoghain of taking the name Ó Néill and of committing certain murders. A different jury, drawn from Tír Eoghain, sat on this; see Cal. S P Ire. 1601 - 1608, 391.

22 The Chronicle of Ireland, 187-9.

23 Ó Lochlainn, Tobar fíorghlan Gaedhilge 1450 -1853, 69-70; IHS iii (1942) 35.

24 Cal. SP Ire. 1608 - 1610, 195.

possess being a people inclined to blood and trouble but to displant them is very difficult'.²⁵ By 1610, when the official plantation proclamation was made, Mac Suibhne and friends were numbered among 'the better sort of natives'.²⁶ The reference to 'Donnell McSwyne Faine' living at Caroocomony, which occurs in 'A book of the Plantation of Ulster' dated 28 March 1619, is possibly the last reference we have to Domhnall Mac Suibhne.²⁷

Apart from being a neat and entertaining little piece, our poem is interesting in that it provides us, in my opinion, with an extra little detail regarding Fearghal Óg's biography in the years before he became attached to Mág Aonghusa.

Editorial remarks: The only copy of this poem, known to me, is in RIA MS 24 P 25, f. 79v. The third section of this manuscript contains some fifteen poems to Domhnall Mac Suibhne Fánad and his wife Gráinne. Both Fr. Walsh²⁸ and Kathleen Mulchrone²⁹ thought the poem incomplete. In this they were mistaken. While the manuscript page is much defaced and very difficult to read in places, the final quatrain shows perfect 'dúnadh'. The cataloguers may have been misled by the last few words on the page which are not a continuation of the poem but, rather, a scribal

25 Ibid., 57-8.

26 Cal. Carew MSS 1603 - 1624, 61.

27 If, indeed, it is not his son, Domhnall Gorm, who is intended; see further q. 10a.n. (note 15). The reference to 'Donell McSwyne gent' living in Clandavadoge c. 1659 is to Domhnall's grandson, Domhnall Óg; Pendar (ed.), A census of Ireland c. 1659, 58.

28 LCS, p. lxi.

29 RIA Catg, 1253.

colophon which reads: 'ac sin duit (...) o mhealladh maighdine'. 'Mealladh Maighdine' is the nom de plume of the scribe of a significant part of Domhnall's duanaire.

I have had to restore the text of the poem in many areas where it is obscured, through staining, in the manuscript. These restorations, for the most part, are conjectural and are shown between square brackets. At q. 14b I have failed to decide on any reasonable emendation and, in this case, the lacuna is indicated with round brackets.

Metre deibhidhe, dán díreach.

- 1 Ní thréigfe mé Mac Suibhne -
creideadh cách uaim m'fhorfhuighle -
ré lán na fréimhe dá bhfoil,
mo chéile do chlár Chriomhthuin.
- 2 Aoineach dá dtiobhruinn a thoil
ní fhacamair i n-Ulltaibh,
géag is uaisle dá fhine
nár bhréag uaimse m'oirbhire.
- 3 Neach dá dtréigfinn mo thriath féin
a-nois ní fhaicim ainnséin,
óigfhear ar nach uighthear locht,
i gcóigeadh chruithgheal Chon(na)cht.

1 I will not desert Mac Suibhne - let all believe my words - full moon of the stock from which he hails, my spouse from the plain of Criomhthan.

2 We have not discerned anyone in Ulster to whom I should give the affection which is his, most noble scion of his race who has not drawn my reproach from me.

3 I do not see anyone there now, in the beautiful province of Connacht, on whose account I would abandon my own lord, young man on whom no fault will be found.

Heading: Fearghal occ mac Fearghail meic Domhnaill Ruaidh Meic in Baird.

- 1 a threicfe; b bforbfaoighle; c (?) se lan na sreimhe; d crimhthuin.
3 a dtreicfinn; c aigfhear; fuighthear; lacht;
d cruithgheal f crodha with f cruith gel written overhead.

4 Sgēal nach cōir do chur i bhfad:
neach dā dtrēigfinn triath Fānad
nī fhuaire mē i mīonmhagh Mhumhan,
rē fhīorghlan gan urrdhubhadh.

5 Uaisle clāir Laighean go lēir,
dā bhfaicinn uile iadsēin,
an saoirbheangān ōn tīr thall,
ar n-aoinleannān díbh Domhnall.

6 Dōibh fōs, nī fachuin diomdha,
nī thrēigfinn mo thighiorna,
sluagh mīn[Mhidhe na mūr nglan],
an rīghbhile ō Dhūn Dealgan.

4 A tale not to be bruited abroad: I have not found
in the smooth plain of Mumha anyone for whom I would
desert the prince of Fānad, pure moon without eclipse.

5 Were I to observe them all, all the nobles of the
plain of Laighin, our only lover of them [all would
still be] Domhnall, the noble scion from yonder
territory.

6 Not for them either, the host of level Midhe of
the bright ramparts, would I desert my lord, the royal
tree from Dún Dealgan; it is no cause for resentment.

4 a bhfad; b threicfinn; c mionmhagh; d urrdhughadh.

5 b iadsein; d naoinleannān] naoi(.)/gleannan (ceann fo eite).

6 a niomda; b threicfinn.

- 7 Gan adhbhar nī thugas toil
do tar uaislibh fhōid Fhionntuin,
nī chuirfe an tnūdh ionn uadha,
liom a rūn 's a rīoguala.
- 8 Cnū mullaigh mhaicne Suibhne,
liom tar cāch a chomhairle,
troigh sheang is ollmha eachtra,
's is leam colbha a chaoimhleabtha.
- 9 Liom a leathuille i lār chāich,
liom fōs a eirreadh ōrshnāith -
neach nach ca[igealtach] ar crodh -
's a each aigeantach uasal.

7 Not without cause have I given affection to him in preference to [the rest of] the nobility of the land of Fionntan: mine is his confidence and [the position by] his royal shoulder; envy will not separate us from him.

8 Topmost fruit of the progeny of Suibhne, slender foot most ready for action, mine is his counsel, in preference to all others and mine is [the place by] the side of his fair bed.

9 In the midst of all, mine is [the place by] his elbow, mine again is his gold-embroidered garment and his noble, high-spirited horse - he is a person not sparing in the matter of wealth.

7 b thar; uaisliph; c inn; d rioghuala.

8 a mullaigh; c tseang; ullma; eachtrra; d liom.

9 b eiradh.

- 10 Dā mheince tēighinn dā thigh,
m'oide [soghrādha] suilbhir,
rī is omhan [i] d[tru]aill treasa,
folamh uaidh nīor fhilleasa.
- 11 An rī fēin, re cois a chruidh,
do-gh[éa]bhainn uaidh i n-Ulltuibh,
[damh dá mbréag]adh a bhronnadh;
a thréag[a]dh nīor thogrumar.
- 12 Nī thréigiobh h-ē, ō's í a thoil,
go dula ar ais i n-Ulltoibh,
['s ó's aige an barr] nach bearair
[do Gha]ll nā do Ghaidhealaibh.

10 As often as I used to go to his house, my charming, cheerful tutor, a king fearful in battle-armour, I [never] returned empty-handed from it.

11 In addition to his wealth, I would get from him the king himself, in Ulster, if he could obtain his bestowal on me; we have not resolved to leave him.

12 Since it is his wish, I will not desert him until [his power] wanes in Ulster and since his is the supremacy which is not conceded either to Englishman or to the Irish.

10 b, c see notes.

11 a see notes; b g(..)binn; c see notes; d togrumair.

12 a ossí; b, c, d see notes.

- 13 Sī do thrēigean nīor mheas mē;
 an séad nach iarr[thaí] uirthē -
 [gealltar tnúidh] na dāimhe dhí -
 le Grāinne dūinn do dhāiltí.
- 14 Sgēala a teasd[a] i gcēin do-clos,
 acht gidh me (...)feir ní(...),
 [ní fhuighe] bēim fa bronnadh:
 bēim uirre nī fhuarom[ar].
- 15 Sgēal uirthi nī h-ai[thnidh] d'fhior:
 diomdha fa dhāil a maoin[eadh] -
 [pailm fhin]ngheal do choill cheinīl -
 [níor thoill] inghean Eibhilīn.

13 The treasure which was not sought from her was given by Gráinne to us; the affection of the poets is assured her - I have not thought to leave her.

14 Tidings of her reputation have been heard afar, ..., she will receive no reproach regarding her munificence: we have found no fault with her.

15 No man knows of any fault with her: Eibhilín's daughter - fair and radiant palm-tree of her race's wood - has not earned displeasure regarding the dispensing of her riches.

14 a test; d uirrthi.

15 b main(...); c chinil; d eibilīN (sic).

- 16 A dhoirseōir Chrīosd caomhuin mhē,
 m'anam ō Airdrī[gh Nimhe]
 [tar m'] fhalaidh nā diūltar dhi,
 nā tabhair diūltadh dūinne.

N.I.t.

- 16 O door-keeper of Christ protect me, do not refuse
 me, despite my sin let not my soul be rejected by
 the supreme King of Heaven.

- 16 a chriosst; c diulthar.

III Notes

1 b m'fhorfhuighle Only forms beginning with a vowel are cited by IGT ii.53. Forms in f-, however, are found in Classical Verse from time to time, e.g. DMU XI. 3b, TD 8. 19c.

c The phrase 'ré lán' is quite common in this type of verse and I have little doubt that it is the correct reading here; cf. Poem IX. 23a, DMU I. 19a, Butlers 1.16c, Di.D 19.6b.

d Chriomhthuin, n. sg. Criomhthan(n), is probably to be identified with Crimthann Már mac Fidaig, the supposed predecessor of Niall Naoighiallach in the kingship of Ireland, Corp. Gen., 122; see EIHM, 209-11, 496-7 and Byrne, Irish kings and high-kings, 75, 183. Thus 'clár C.' is a name for Ireland; cf. DMU II. 7d, L Branach line 2242. For the 'breacadh' here (mé :ré: thréigfe/ Suibhne/ fréimhe/ chéile) see Breacadh 28. Other instances, with variations, of this type will be found in qq. 4, 13, 15 and 16.

3 c óigfhear (MS aigfhear) Óg and ág are permitted variants, IGT ii. 96; óig- is necessary here for perfect rime.

uigthear (MS fuighthear) Forms in f-, o- and u- are regular in the conjugation of do-gheibh,

IGT iii. 22. The emended form is metrically necessary.

locht (MS lacht) is the only form of this word cited IGT ii. 95.

4 a The sense seems to be that this report should not be carried afar lest the poet offend the Munster people, a reasonable notion considering Fearghal Óg's special relationship with Munster (see General Introduction). For cuiridh i bhfad cf. DIL F, 386.63-7 and Aith. D 31.29d. Alternatively it might be possible to see this as a 'gá dtám do' - type expression and translate 'not to make my story unduly long'.

c míonmhagh One might expect míonmhuigh here (cf. Poem II. 29b, 30c) but the rime indicates that this cannot be correct. We may have to do here with some form of 'cosg réime' on a noun accompanied by a gen. of identity or description, cf. Éigse iii (1941-2) 61(d). Note that a dat. sg. for Magh Fáil is proscribed by IGT ii. 176.

5 b A possible interpretation of the use of the subjunctive mood here might be that Fearghal Óg had yet to visit Leinster. This would be in accordance with the early date suggested in my note to q. 7. See General Introduction, chapter (iv) n. 39.

d I have made the given emendation as it seems to me to resolve some of the difficulties involved in the use of díbh. The alternatives are (i) to take MS -g- (see apparatus) as scribal gh for bh/mh, another instance of which will be found at q.

4d, thus giving either n-aoibhleannán 'beautiful lover' or naoimhleannán 'saintly lover'; (ii) to take MS -g- as scribal gh for dh giving, perhaps n-aoidhleannán 'attentive lover' (?). I have rejected compounds of aoghe or naoidhe as elision of the final vowel would be irregular (IGT i. 138-42). It may also be just possible that 'ní thréigfinn' is to be understood at the head of the clause - though the prep. do is the one used with this verb throughout the poem - translating as '[I would not desert] Domhnall for any lover of them'.

6 c My suggested reading is conjectural. 'Midhe', however, might be expected as the poet has already mentioned the other four cóigidh.

For the original five cóigidh and the invention of two Munster provinces to compensate for the 'loss' of Midhe due to the special status of Teamhair see EIHM, ch. IX. In general, it seems that when the Classical poets spoke of five cóigidh they meant Mumha, Connacht, Laighin, Midhe and Ulaidh¹; e.g. POR XXVII. 2-3, Mac C M XV. 30-32, Butlers VIII. 26-8. When they thought in terms of four, Midhe was excluded; Ó hEoghusa's list in Di D 75.46 would seem to imply this. The distinction would appear to be a more or less random choice between the contemporary and the anachronistic. Thus, Fearghal Óg, in Poem IV. 10b, talks of 'ar na ceithre cóigeadhaibh', while, in addressing Mág Aonghusa, he says 'a chearchuill na gcóig gcóigeadh', Poem V. 10d; cf. Poem X. 46-8. In Fearghal Óg's day, Midhe would have been practically synonymous with the Pale and this connection is made

1 Cf., however, Foras Feasa i, 32 and L. Branach, lines 529-44.

in 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn' (IBP 5.11).

d Not surprisingly, there is nothing to suggest any historical connection between Domhnall and Dún Dealgan. It is simply another instance of the convention whereby the poet selects a prominent place with which to associate his subject; cf. 'Aodh Doire' (= Aodh Mág Aonghusa) Duanaireacht, 108.3d; 'Aodh Life' (= Aodh Ó Néill) Poem XII. 41a.; see Éigse iv (1943-4) 101.18b n., 102.19b n., 103.24a n. and 25b n.; TD i, p. lvi.

7 a toil Professor P. Breatnach, in his essay on the relationship between the Irish Classical poet and his patron¹, developing ideas first advanced by Professor Carney², had discussed the theme - and the terminology which articulates it - of the poet as lover or spouse of his patron. This theme has been present in our poem from q. 1d on.

Words, such as toil, are used by the poets 'to denote the bond uniting poet and patron' (p. 42). While urging caution in interpreting occurrences of this theme too finely, Breatnach suggests that 'when developed and sustained in a composition the theme indicates that the author coveted a special, perhaps official, status in the house of the patron addressed'.

There can be little doubt that when Fearghal Óg uses this theme with reference to Aodh Mág Aonghusa (see references q. 9cd n.) he is describing an actual situation. With Professor Breatnach, one feels that

1 'The chief's poet' in PRIA 83 C (1983) 37-79, especially pp. 40-51.

2 References *ibid.*, 40 n. 14.

this theme is often used more to describe or suggest something which might or should be rather than something which actually is. In the present case, for instance, our poet may well be saying that he is the recipient of special favour from Mac Suibhne but it could be equally true that, to use Professor Breatnach's word, he is coveting that special status rather than actually enjoying it. In this context, it is worth noting that, among the poets in Mac Suibhne's duanaire, Fearghal Óg is not alone in claiming this position: see, for example the anonymous poem quoted q. 8d n. *infra*. Viewed in this light, the theme of the lover-poet can be seen as possibly constituting part of the general tendency to idealize in Irish Classical verse, comparable, to a certain extent, with the poets' claims of total supremacy for the subjects of their verses.

Whether or not Fearghal Óg is describing a reality, it seems unlikely that he would have made such claims had he been attached to Aodh Mág Aonghusa at the time. The poem, therefore, may date from either before the beginning of our poet's relationship with Mág Aonghusa or after his death. The reference to Domhnall as 'óigfhear' in q. 3c suggests that it may be to the period not long after Domhnall's inauguration in 1570 that the poem belongs and may thus be among the earliest of Fearghal Óg's compositions. The absence of 'duty' quatrains to either Conn Ó Ruairc or to Mág Aonghusa might lend support to this, though such evidence is never conclusive. We have seen, in the General Introduction, that the earliest poem containing a complimentary quatrain to Mág Aonghusa may be 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn' which was possibly composed circa 1581.

b Fhionntuin Probably the mythological Fionntan mac Bóchra, noted for his longevity, who is said to have arrived in Ireland before the Flood; cf. Foras Feasa i, 142 ff., EIHM, 318-9. Thus 'fód Fionntain' etc. is a name for Ireland; e.g. TD 7. 14d; POR XXXIII. 12d.

c an tnúdh Presumably the envy of other poets. Alternatively it might be translated as 'love', cf. q. 13c.

d The words 'rún', 'cogar' and 'comhairle' (cf. q. 8b) are used, in the context of the present theme, to refer to the poet's sharing of his patron's counsel, to his admittance to his chief's confidence. Breatnach (loc. cit., 45-51) comments on this with special reference to the work of Fearghal Óg. ~~The~~ positioning of the poet at his patron's guala or uille (cf. q. 9a) is indicative of the bestowal of the same honour (Breatnach, 45-8).

8 a Absence of lenition on mullaigh after fem. cnú is an instance of sléagar; maicne (IGT ii.1) may be either masc. or fem.

c ollmha 'ullma' is barely discernable in the manuscript; ollmha - 'ollamh' being a permitted variant of 'ullamh' (IGT ii. 118) - is required by metre.

d leam is a permitted variant of MS liom (BST 194.15) and necessary for rime here.

colbha is a word which is found in many contexts in Classical verse. It is used in reference to the limit of a territory (Aith. D 28.22c; DMU IV.

31b); to a beach (O Hara XVI. 34a; Aith. D 26.28d); to the side of the head (Di. D 99.32c) and also, quite frequently, to the side, or edge of a bed where, for instance, the warrior keeps his sword at the ready (O Hara VIII. 34). For other examples of the use of colbha see Éigse iv (1943-4) 99-100, 13a n.; for its use with 'leaba' see DIL C, 323.80 ff.

Once more, the reference here belongs to the theme of the poet as lover of his patron: 'In its most striking expression this represents the relationship between poet and patron as a marriage, the two parties sharing the same bed' (Breatnach, 40). In this respect, the following lines from another poem in Mac Suibhne's 'duanaire' are worth quoting.

Na biodh éd ar dheaghmnaibh dhe
fan leannan ler luidh meisi
s nach feis le enfer dob al
ar denam leis mar lennan.

Leannan comainn do car sinn
Mac Suibhne as e do bhraithfinn
ré lán is céile cubaidh
lan [d] feile is dealaghain.

Leis mar leannan do luidh me
gan chead dinghin Maoil Mhuire
na biodh sé uirthé na ed
ní mé ba chuirthe a coimed. (24 P 25, f.80r)

9 a For the 'breacadh fíre' here,
liom:liom:, see Breacadh 14, 15.

cd I have not met with other examples of
either caigealtach or aigeantach in published

Classical verse; cf. DIL C, 294.45-8, A, 95.60-66. However, the form 'cogaltach' occurs elsewhere in 24 P 25, in a poem ascribed to Flann Óg mac Méig Chraith, where, speaking of Domhnall's wife, Gráinne, he says:

ar chléir ní cogaltach ccraidh
an bogfholtach seimh shochraidh (f. 81v. b)

For the gifts which a poet might expect to receive from his patron - including his cloak and steed - cf. 'Nír iomchuir meisi mé féin' (Éigse ii (1940) 157-62) qq. 14-19 and 'Mairg atá an uairsi gan Aodh' (Duanaireacht, 108-10) qq. 9, 11.

The custom whereby the ollamh claims the chief's cloak at his inauguration has been dealt with, inter alia, by Professor Mac Cana in two articles¹; see also Dillon, 'The inauguration of O Conor' in Watt et al. (eds) Medieval studies: 'a each 7 a eadach do chomharba Dá Chona 7 a dhol do dhruim I Chonchubhair ar an each sin' (p. 189); cf. Hore, 'Inauguration of Irish chiefs' in UJA v (1857) 223.

However, the present instance, and those in the two poems mentioned above, seem to belong to a more generalised practice. It is interesting, therefore to note the parallel suggested by Breathnach (p. 47) between the relationship between poet and patron and that which obtained between a chief and his 'deputy'. I have mentioned, in my Introduction, that Clann Suibhne Fánad first became official gallóglaigh to Ó Domhnaill in the late fourteenth century. This arrangement arose from a dispute between Ó Domhnaill, Toirdhealbhach an Fhíona, and Mac Suibhne's son,

1 'An archaism in Irish poetic tradition' in Celtica viii (1968) 174-81; 'Eirreadh Nuachair: nótaí breise ar an deasghnáth' in Watson (ed.), Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe, 86-93.

Toirdhealbhadh Ruadh who, at the time, was a prisoner of the former (LCS, 40.29-30). Mac Meic Suibhne claimed that, were he set at liberty, Ó Domhnaill would not enjoy the power which was his at the time. Ó Domhnaill decided to set him free but Toirdhealbhadh Ruadh said that he could only travel back to Fánad by escaping, or under guarantee of Ó Domhnaill's full protection, the token of which was 'culaidh persanna Thorrdelbaig an Fhíona dhó fein, 7 a muinnter [sc. Ó Domhnaill's people] leis da innlacad...'.¹⁰

Similarly, when, shortly afterwards, Ó Domhnaill was bestowing gifts on Mac Suibhne, Toirdhealbhadh Caoch, as a prelude to the official contract of service, among the items granted were 'ced bo 7 culaidh persanna I Domhnaill fein...' (LCS. 42). That this situation still obtained in the late sixteenth century is witnessed to by Tadhg Dall, in his poem to Domhnall, where he says:

Do dlighfidhe dod dheirc mhoill
leathuille dheas Í Dhomhnoill....

Mac Suibhne an tráth fa dtugthair
ort, a ghnúsnair ghuasachtaigh,
téid beirt Í Dhomhnaill Doire
dod dheirc mhongmhoill mhaordhuidhe.

(TD 27.20-21)

From this we may conclude that the bestowal of the chief's cloak or apparel was a token of special favour which also signified that the recipient enjoyed the protection of his lord.

¹⁰ a dá thigh The castle of Domhnall Mac Suibhne Fánad was situated at Ráith Maoláin, or

Rathmullan¹, on the eastern shore of the Fánad peninsula, overlooking Loch Swilly. The earliest mention we have of it is during the rule of Domhnall's grandfather, Ruaidhrí, who became Mac Suibhne Fánad in 1472 and ruled for forty-six years until his death in 1518. 24 P 25 says of him:

Et asse an Mac Suibnesi do roinne caislen
Ratha Maolain ar tus 7 issi an ben do bi
aicce.i. Maire ingen Eogain mic Diarmada
Bacaidh Í Mhaille do roinne mainister Ratha
Maolain 7 isse Mac Suibne 7 an ben sin do
tharruincc ord chum na mainistreachsin as in
Mumhain andeas ... 7 isse annaile an Tigerna
an tan tuccadh an mhainister sin amach .i.
se bliadna deg 7 .cccc. 7 mile bliadan.²

Tha annals have the following entry s.a. 1516:

Caislén Mic Suibne (Fhánat AFM) .i. Rath
Maoláin do thuitim (in hoc anno AC, ALC).³

Fr. Walsh, therefore, came to the reasonable conclusion that the 24 P 25 reference concerned the rebuilding of Rathmullan castle.⁴

The following description of the castle and Carmelite priory comes from Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh:

Caistiall eisdhe baoi for ur na tragma. Ro
fothaighedh fri hurd 7 oiffern do Mhaire
mathair an Choimdedh hi ccomhfhochraibh dó 7

1 See J.J. Silke, 'Old Rathmullan' in Donegal Annual xi. 1 (1974) 22-32.

2 LCS, 66.

3 AFM v, 1334; AC, 630; ALC ii, 226.

4 LCS, xxviii.

ba mendat airrderc fri hiomathaigid laoch 7
chlerech na ccricioch ccomhfhogus.⁵

Rathmullan is associated with two significant events in history. The first was that which occasioned Ó Cléirigh's description, given above, when in 1587 an English ship, disguised as a trading vessel, sailed from Dublin, anchored in Lough Swilly off Rathmullan and effected the capture of young Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill by enticing him on board. Indeed Mac Suibhne Fánad, Domhnall of our poem, was an apparently unwitting agent in this as he encouraged Aodh Ruadh to visit the ship, he himself being embarrassed at his own lack of refreshment.⁶

The second incident, and one which was of far greater historical importance⁷, was the departure from Rathmullan, in 1607, of Rudhraighe Ó Domhnaill, Aodh Ó Néill and Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir, together with their retinues, for France (see General Introduction, chapter (vii)). Their task of provisioning the ship was not made easier by one of Domhnall Mac Suibhne's sons (not named) who raided them while they were drawing water and firewood.⁸

Rathmullan first fell to the English in 1601.⁹ On 10 March of that year, Henry Docwra sent Captain Ralph Bingley, with between 150 and 200 men, across Lough Swilly and these 'after some little resistance' captured Rathmullan.¹⁰ It would seem that the Abbey

5 BAR i, 6.

6 Ibid., 2-10. It appears that Domhnall's son, Domhnall Gorm, was also captured: see Introduction.

7 But cf. A. Boyle, 'The flight of the Earls' in Studies xliv (1955) 469-78.

8 Walsh, The flight of the Earls, 8.

9 The Abbey had already been plundered in 1595 by George Bingham: Misc. Celt. Soc., 223; BAR i, 94.

10 Cal. SP Ire. 1600-1601, 213, 223, 229, 236. 289; Misc. Celt. Soc., 250.

was of more logistic importance than the castle and that, at this time, its function was mainly that of a storehouse and potential refuge for Docwra's temperamental ally, Niall Garbh Ó Domhnaill, who was garrisoned some five miles to the south at Ramelton.¹¹

A garrison at Rathmullan was quickly built up with 100 men under Captain Digges.¹² By early 1602 its strength was 300 men under Bingley and Sir M. Morgan.¹³ In 1606 Rathmullan is mentioned as being leased from the king by Sir James Fullerton.¹⁴

It appears, however, that Rathmullan was, at least temporarily, in Irish hands again in 1607: it would scarcely have been selected as a point of departure for the Earls had it been otherwise. One English commentator remarked that 'if it [sc. Rathmullan] had been in English hands, as was intended, their [sc. the Earls'] long-hatched treason had ere this been discovered and their flight ... had been prevented'.¹⁵

The Ulster Plantation finally saw Rathmullan settled as an English town and by 1611 proposals were being drawn up to make it a borough 'enabling them to send burgesses to Parliament and to enjoy other privaleges'.¹⁶ In this Plantation one Donell McSwyne Faine was granted 2,000 acres of land at a rent of £21 6s. and 8d. some ten miles to the north of Rathmullan at 'Royndeherg and Caroocomony' where he had 'a good bawn and a house of lime and stone in which he dwells

11 Cal. SP Ire. 1600-1601, 292.

12 Ibid., 376.

13 Cal. SP Ire. 1601-1603, 267; this was reduced by half later in the same year: *ibid.*, 476.

14 Cal. SP Ire. 1606-1608, 68.

15 Ibid., 341.

16 Cal SP Ire. 1611-1614, 302; Cal. Carew MSS 1603-1624, 136, 170; despite these plans Rathmullan was never incorporated: see *Stud. Hib.* xi (1971) 48.

with his family'.¹⁷

The Abbey was converted into a private dwelling by Bishop Knox of Raphoe in 1618 and the Knox family remained there until sometime in the 18th century. The ruins of the Abbey still remain though the site of the castle is no longer visible.¹⁸

Tadhg Dall in his poem beginning 'Leithéid Almhan i nUlaibh' gives a stereotyped, though lively and colourful account of life at Ráith Maoláin.¹⁹ In another poem in 24 P 25, from which I quoted in q. 7d n., beginning 'Toghaim leannán do leith Cuinn' (f. 80r), the anonymous poet paints a similar picture:

Gnath gach aoinfer da fhaicsin
dfios an fhionnmhuir oirdircsin
derbaid clair nac tur tuirrsi
triall go dun in Domhnoillsi.

Tegh ma lia trealamh troda
mar raith cloinne Cearmoda
re hucht timchoil gac tochair
is lucht imchuir anndochair.

-
- 17 Cal. Carew MSS 1603-1624, 408; cf. Cal. SP Ire. 1611-1614, 208. It is not clear whether this is our Domhnall or his son, Domhnall Gorm. I have not located Carrocomony (cf. Walsh, *Irish chiefs and leaders*, 199) but it is presumably adjacent to Royndeherg which is marked in Petty's *Maps of Ireland* (1683). For a complete list of lands granted to Domhnall Mac Suibhne see Hill, *An historical account*, 327. In this source the two placenames given above are spelt Ringdooghargie and Carrownamoney; see also Simms, 'The Ulster plantation in county Donegal' in *Donegal Annual* x/1 (1971) 12-13.
- 18 *Arch. Surv.*, 343-6, 382; *UJA* xiv (1908) 79; cf. *AFM* v, 1334 note n.
- 19 *TD* 27.9-11.

Teg on minca diol re daim
longport riogh Ratha Maolain
 duin tar gac aoinneach do fhoillsigh [sic]
mur daoineach in Domnaillsin.

b The manuscript is unclear at this point; 'moide' is just visible; then follows what appears to be 'sgruaidh' with 'ngradha' in a different hand overhead; this is followed by 'tsoilbir'. My reconstruction, then, is rather speculative. A trisyllabic adj. with #s- seems the best option and soghrádha (cf. soghráidh Aith. D 34. 19c, soghrádhach TD 32. 53b, Magauran XXX. 26d) looks plausible enough. I have shown suilbhir for MS 'tsoilbir': cf. m'fhuighlibh : suilbhir Di. D 17. 32cd.

c [i]d^h[tru]aill The two ls can be distinguished, and the preceding ai with some difficulty. There is space for one letter between d and ai and my suggested reading therefore assumes that this is occupied by t with an ru contraction overhead. Compare these lines on Domhnall Mac Suibhne from a poem, in the same manuscript, ascribed to Donnchadh Ó Cléirigh:

A ua na rígh do fhrem Eogain
 imdha tir a tucais mairg
 cosmail do buille a truail treasa
 re fuaim buinne easa aird. (f. 76v)

11 a The manuscript is badly stained here. Having examined it under every available condition of light, the reading of the first four letters seems to be 'A nri'. Taking this as 'An rí', I read it as the object of do-ghéabhainn, rather than as being in

apposition with uaidh, though this is all speculative as the correct reading of line c is unknown; do ghéabhainn could also be read, 2nd Fut., 1st sg. of 'gabhaim'. My tentative interpretation would be that, as a pledge of his love, and in addition to his wealth, Domhnall would bestow 'an rí féin' on the poet; this would be a reference to the rí of Tír Chonaill, Ó Domhnaill.

Various possible alternatives, all involving emendations, exist for the reading of this line. Among them I would number the following: (i) Án ríogh féin, 'The splendour of a king himself'; for evidence of declensional confusion with respect to rí in the Classical period see Éigse xxi (1986) 62.10c n.; (ii) Ón rígh féin 'from the king himself'; (iii) Ar rí féin 'Our own king'; (iv) A ria féin 'All that he himself will/may acquire'; -ria = fut. indic./pres. subj., 3rd sg. conj. of do-soigh (IGT ii. 15); (v) A ríomh féin 'All [the wealth] which he himself [can] reckon'; ríomh féin > MS rí féin through sandhi; (vi) A righ féin 'his own arm'; this could be construed as an allusion to, and development on the famous story told of the fourteenth century Mac Suibhne Fánad, Maol Muire mac Murchaidh Óig, who, rather than suffer shame before poets who demanded immediate reward, and being unable to remove a ring from his finger, cut off the finger: LCS, 32-6, Di.D 102. 17-33.

c Because of the uncertainty of the reading in a, it is doubtful whether restoration here is worth attempting. However, I have been guided by the following quatrain by Fearghal Óg in which an extravagant claim is qualified with realism:

Ar mo bhreith do bheidís uaidh,
 dá mbeidís ar a bhreith féin,
 Mág Aonghusa m'ortha ghráidh,
 comhtha Cláir chaomhRosa is Céin.

(Duanaireacht, 109.12).

12 a h-ē The prefixed 'h' may, properly, represent the lenition of -b # although there is already a punctum over that letter and the words are clearly divided in the manuscript.

ō's 'ó' is not elided here. The grammarians permitted this in the case of a long 'iarmbéarla'; cf. Graiméir, lines 3452-60.

b The reading and meaning of this line are uncertain. The final word is much obscured but it must be disyllabic and must rime with toil, which, if necessary, could be emended to 'tol', 'tal' or 'tail' (IGT ii. 95, 96, 14).

'ull-' can be clearly seen; this stroke may be a contraction or may be part of a ligatured 't'. The next letter appears rounded like an 'o', followed, possibly, by one minim. The ascender of a possible 'b' is then visible, then a space, and then what might be 'l' with a ligatured 'e'. After this nothing is visible.

The manuscript is, therefore, too badly damaged to enable us to make a confident reading. Added to this is the fact that, almost directly overhead, in the preceding manuscript line, is 'an ulltaibh' of q. 11b, which could have caused the scribe to err at this point. However, as I can suggest nothing better, I hesitantly accept 'ulltoibh' as the correct reading.

Next we have the problem of meaning. Taking 'ar ais' to mean 'back(wards)' etc., the phrase 'dula ar ais' may be equivalent to 'dul(a) ar gcúl' but, if so, I have not found any corroborative examples. However 'ar ais' is attested in idioms containing pejorative connotations of submission or retreat: Aith. D 40.44d, Magauran XXX. 35a, and cf. , also, its use in the context of rejection: Iomarbhágh IX. 10c, Foirm na nurrnuidheadh, lines 1959-60. Thus, assuming an unexpressed prep. dó, it might be possible to translate 'until [he] submits in Ulster' or to allow for a freer interpretation such as that given in my translation. This would be in keeping with the suggested restoration of lines cd.

Alternatively we could read 'ar áis' and this is most commonly found in the phrase 'ar áis no ar éigin' but it is also found on its own: e.g. Dán Dé XXVI. 42c, Magauran II. 45d, Di. D 102.20b. The translation might then read: 'until [he] leaves [me] of his own accord' or 'until [I] leave [him] ...'.

cd Given the uncertainty in b, the restoration here must remain equally tentative. There are, however, some indicators which might support these readings. (i) 'do Ghall' is suggested by the likely antithesis with 'do Ghaidhealaibh', though the singular/plural contrast is admittedly uncomfortable. (ii) If 'Ghall' be correct, then its riming partner in c should alliterate with bearair to avoid the fault known as 'Cú Mara' (IGT v. 9). (A similar situation obtains in q. 11 cd supra.) (iii) 'beiridh/do-bheir barr do' is an established idiom in this verse: O Hara XXIV. 14c, Iomarbhágh VI. 174b and cf. DIL B, 38.38-9.

For 'aige' in c we could also read 'leis'.

13 The worst staining of the entire page occurs in the area occupied by the last four quatrains of our poem.

b Another possible reading might be nach iarrtha 'which none should ask for'.

d Gráinne I have been as unsuccessful as Eleanor Knott¹ in locating any reference to Domhnall's wife² outside of 24 P 25. However, we can glean some knowledge regarding Gráinne's origins by examining other poems to Domhnall and to her in the duanaire. The most significant references are as follows:

'inghean Mhaoil Mhuire' ff. 77v, 79r, 80r, 81v.b.
 'inghean Aibhilín' f. 78r and q. 15d infra.
 'inghean ríogh Beann mBaghuine' f. 78v=TD 27.42b.
 'inghean Mheic Shuibhne' f. 80r, 81r.b.

The following quatrain, from the poem beginning 'Do sguir cogadh críche Fánad', is also relevant:

Fuil o mBaoidhill na mbert norrduirc
 ag adhnadh tre gili a gruaidh
 is cru Suibhne a ccend a ceile
 na buidhne or ferr Eire duaim. (f. 80v.b)

From these references we can conclude that Gráinne's mother was one Aibhilín/Eibhilín Ní Bhaoighill and that her father was Maol Muire Mac Suibhne Baghuineach. This must have been either Maol Muire

1 TD ii, 270.

2 The statement, Cal. SP Ire. 1600, 259, that Mac Suibhne Fánad was married to a sister of Tibbot Burke is clearly a mistake. It was Mac Suibhne Baghuineach who was involved in this marriage, cf. Cal. SP Ire., 1592-1596, 369.

mac Aodha mac Néill who, with two of his sons, died at Cill Tuathail in 1581¹, or his son, Maol Muire Óg, who succeeded him but only ruled for a year before being slain on 4 June, 1582.²

In Lambeth Palace Library MS 635, f. 111v, there is a genealogy of 'McSwine Bannaght' which shows that 'Moylmorry Merge McSwyn', son of 'Tirloghe McSwyne Banaght', was married to a daughter of O Boyle (un-named) and, by her, had two sons and two daughters. This genealogy is confused, however, as Maol Muire Meirgeach was son, not of Toirdhealbhadh, but of Maol Muire mac Néill³. Neither can this daughter of O Boyle - if the rest of the genealogy be correct - have been Gráinne's mother as Maol Muire Meirgeach never became head of his family but died in 1564 while still 'mac Meic Shuibhne'.⁴

In his final colophon, at the end of 24 P 25 (f. 81v), Mealladh Maighdine excuses his handwriting by listing the difficulties he had to endure while working. Among these were 'Gille Brighde dar mbogadh 7 Gráinne dar mallachadh'. This may be another reference to Domhnall's wife.

14 b I can make nothing of this line; 'acht gidh' is barely discernable but the remainder is quite unclear.

c Note that the suggested reading here involves emending MS 'uirthi', in d, to its permitted variant 'uirre' (BST 193.24). This could be avoided

1 AFM v, 1768; LCS, 110; Cal. SP Ire., 1574-1585, 309; and cf. Poem IV. 77b.

2 AFM v, 1788; LCS, 110.

3 See LCS, xxxix, 109.

4 AFM v, 1598-1600.

by reading -fuighthe and translating 'no reproach was received'.

For the 'breacadh fíre' gcéin: béim: béim see Breacadh, 24(a), 25(i)-(iv).

15 c 'Pailm' is a common complimentary epithet in this poetry, cf. Poems II. 26d and V. 5a.

For the attributive use of the gen. sg. of 'ceinéal' see DIL C, 116.55-64, and cf. Poem VII. 15c.

d Eibhilín See q. 13d n. supra. The final letter is written as a capital in the manuscript to show 'dúnadh'.

POEM IV

Introduction

Conn mac An Chalbhaigh Í Dhomhnaill died at his castle at Lifford on March 13, 1583.¹ The 'Four Masters' record his death as follows:

Cond mac an Calbhaicch, meic Maghnusa meic Aodha Duibh meic Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill do écc 13 do Marta. Saoi dtherscraigthe deigheinigh, fer soithimh soagallmha, post congmhala do cliaraibh 7 do ceithearnaibh, fer cendaighthe duan et drécht adhmolta ar a iolmhaoinibh feisin, fer as luccha rob olc clú 7 cétfaidh do clandaibh Neill Naoighiallaigh, gur bho samhail do chruit gan chéis, do luing gan lúamhaire et do ghort taobh re tollairbhe Cenel gConaill don cur sin íar nécc Cuind.²

Eleanor Knott published a good account of Conn in TD ii, 187-8, to which the following may be regarded merely as a supplement.

Little is known of Conn's early years - the earliest reference to him is 1549 when he is mentioned in a settlement between Maghnas Ó Domhnaill and An Calbhach³. The identity of his mother, Siobhán (q. 3), remains uncertain, but it appears that he was fostered in Meath with Sir Thomas Cusack⁴ where, according to one account, he 'was brought up in

1 'Conn dfhagháil bháis a Leifer 13 lá do Mhárta 1583', BAR ii, 94.47.

2 AFM v, 1792.

3 Cf. notes to qq. 15c and 71a *infra*.

4 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 518.

thinglyshe Pale and doth speke good inglyshe'⁵.

Perhaps the most important feature of Conn's career is his relationship with the two Ó Néills, Seaán an Díomais and his successor, Toirdhealbhach Luineach. No sooner did Seaán become taoiseach in 1559 than he captured and imprisoned An Calbhach and his wife, Catherine MacLean.⁶ At this time, Conn and his father were in conflict with An Calbhach's brother, Cathbharr, and it seems that his capture was due both to Seaán's exploiting of this situation and to certain machinations on Catherine's part: she was later to bear Seaán's children.⁷ An Calbhach was not released until some time in 1562.⁸

Conn's part in this affair is still in doubt. In a series of letters⁹ to the Earl of Essex, in 1562, An Calbhach accuses Conn of deliberately avoiding making a settlement with Ó Néill in order to advance his own claims to the Uí Dhomhnaill chieftaincy. This would seem to be supported by a letter from the Lord Lieutenant to the Queen, in the same year, in which he mentions an arrangement between Conn and Ó Néill whereby Conn would become Ó Domhnaill and Ó Néill would keep An Calbhach in captivity for the rest of his days¹⁰. The same letter states that Conn's marriage to Seaán's daughter, Róise, is imminent.¹¹

5 Scots Merc., 347.

6 AFM v, 1574 - 6.

7 Ibid.; Scots Merc., 149-51.

8 In a letter to the Queen in 1564, he says that Ó Néill kept him in chains for 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ years: Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 247. Scots Merc., 151, is surely incorrect both in giving the date of his capture as 1561, and in saying that he died in captivity. The 'Four Masters' tell us that he fell dead from his horse in 1566.

9 Ó Lochlainn, *Tobar fíorghlan Gaedhilge*, 33 and O Grady, *Catalogue i*, 57-60.

10 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 205.

11 For Róise see Knott, loc. cit.; BAR ii, 23. She died in 1585: ALC ii, 466.

Against this we have Conn's own letter¹² to the Queen in which he complains of Seaán's treatment of his father and mother [sic] and in which he 'hopes Shane may have a sudden fall, for in his promise there is no assurance, nor truth in his word'. O Grady's remarks regarding An Calbhach's letters are pertinent: 'We must remember that these letters were written under O'Neill's eye, the writer being probably kept in ignorance of the true state of things outside'.¹³ One must also recall that prior to An Calbhach's captivity, both he and Conn had been in constant conflict with Seaán.¹⁴ It is this enmity which lies behind the second stage in this affair: Conn's capture and imprisonment by Seaán in 1564.¹⁵

Conn was quickly forced to sign Caisléan na Finne over to Ó Néill¹⁶ but it seems that despite this, and despite pleas on his behalf by An Calbhach¹⁷, he was not set at liberty until 1567¹⁸ by which time Seaán's days were numbered. This period of imprisonment was crucial to Conn's subsequent career for, by the time of his release, not only was his father dead but Conn's uncle, Aodh Dubh, had succeeded as taoiseach.

12 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 206.

13 Op. cit., 60.

14 E.g. cf. the defeat of Seaán at the Cobhartach, q. 63d infra.

15 AFM v, 1598; Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 237; BAR ii, 94.46.

Cf. q. 70c n. infra and General Introduction, chapter (vii) n. 53.

16 Cf. q. 71a n. infra.

17 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 247.

18 Ibid., 334. In a poem by Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird commemorating the defeat of Seaán Ó Néill by Aodh mac Maghnasa Uí Dhomhnaill at Fearsad Suilidhe in 1567, the following quatrain occurs:

Díol na duaine is dearbhtha ag sgoil
dlighidh Connmhac an Chalbhaigh
do-bhí i nglás fa cheó ccumhadh
i ngleó as ga[n] fhuasgaladh.

(NLI MS G 167, p. 133.11-12)

Conn protested that the chieftaincy was rightfully his¹⁹ but, although he was quickly made tánaiste²⁰, he remained, for the rest of his life, in opposition to Aodh Dubh. At the same time, and almost certainly as a consequence of this, Conn began to ally himself to the new Ó Néill, Toirdhealbhach Luineach. In the words of Fearghal Óg, q. 35d infra, this period sees him 'ar tí an tighearnais'.

His alliance with Ó Néill was a gradual affair: they were, for instance, at war with each other in the summer of 1568.²¹ However, from 1569²² onwards Conn played an increasingly important role in the activities of Ó Néill. In this he acted more as an important subordinate than as an ally - someone whom Ó Néill could send with hostages to the Lord Deputy²³ or whom he could despatch to plunder north Connacht²⁴ - to such an extent that, by the end of his career, Conn had gained the reputation of being, in the words of Sir Nicholas Malby, 'Turlough's only favourite'.²⁵ While Conn did his utmost to incite Ó Néill against Ó Domhnaill²⁶, it is possible that his

19 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 347.

20 Ibid., 348.

21 Ibid., 383. In 1562 Toirdhealbhach had written that only he, Maguire and Con O Donnell swore allegiance to England: O Grady, op. cit., 413 n. 3. Toirdhealbhach may, in fact, have been Conn's uncle, see q. 3b n. infra.

22 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 418.

23 Cal. Carew MSS, 1575 - 1588, 109.

24 Cal. SP Ire., 1574 - 1585, 384.

25 Ibid. In the Spring of 1573, Conn was in Glasgow with Ó Néill's wife, Agnes Campbell, meeting with her nephew, the fifth Earl of Argyll; see Calendar of Scottish Papers iv, 1571 - 1574, 545. This is the second recorded visit to Scotland by Conn. He had been there also in 1555 when he accompanied his father on a mission to the fourth Earl of Argyll whose second wife, Catherine MacLean (see supra and q. 3b n. infra.), An Calbhach was later to marry; see. J. Mackenzie, 'Treaty between Argyll and O Donnell' in SGS vii (1953) 94-102.

26 E.g. Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 418 and also q. 77b n. infra. Conn's son, Niall Garbh, inherited this opposition to Ó Domhnaill and his behaviour has sometimes - e.g. Gleanings, 28 - been mistaken for treachery.

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voluntary subordination to Ó Néill militated against his chances of ever attaining the chieftaincy. In any case, the opportunity never arose as his uncle outlived him by nine years.

The English, who at first seem to have been keeping Conn in reserve lest Aodh Dubh should 'rebel',²⁷ viewed his alliance with Ó Néill with displeasure. Conn was imprisoned in Dublin by Essex in 1574²⁸ and a proposal by Captain William Piers, in 1581, that Conn be favoured and installed as Ó Domhnaill, in the event of the latter's death was rejected by the Lord Deputy and his Council who cited Conn's allegiance to Ó Néill and said that, in the matter of recent events, Conn was 'the onely source of quarrell'.²⁹

I regard the following elegy on Conn as a very fine achievement. The thoughtful coherence of the argument with its subtle turns of rhetoric, the stately, measured style and the engaging frankness of Fearghal Óg which is never too far from the surface: all these features combine to achieve a final impression of great and permanent loss.

In the first half of the poem - to q. 42 - a certain process of reduction is noticeable. The opening eight quatrains deal with the futility of Éire's search for a mate from amongst the Conallaigh. This implies that there is no-one worthy of leadership left in Tír Chonaill, now Conn is dead, and so, in qq. 9-14, the poet says that Tír Chonaill must now suffer a reversal of fortunes as it concedes to others its former position of supremacy. The key quatrain here, and indeed in the entire poem, is q. 13 as it

27 Cal. SP Ire., 1509 - 1573, 360.

28 Cal. SP Ire., 1574 - 1584, 39; AFM v, 1674; BAR ii, 94.48.

29 Scots Merc., 353-4.

establishes the theme of vengeance and the tone of tired submission which informs the whole work.

In qq. 15-20 the focus narrows again as it centres on Conn's former seat at Lifford, bereft of the guests and feasts which it enjoyed in Conn's time.

Such a picture is not, of course, unique in the tradition of Classical verse; but the position it occupies in the structure of the poem is important as, in qq. 21-6, Fearghal Óg, narrowing the focus once more, comes to deal with Conn or, rather, Conn in his grave, creating an identity between Conn's present state and that of his castle. The important word here is 'aonar' (qq. 24c, 26d) as it provides, in effect, the catchword - cf. q. 27d - for the ensuing uirsgéal.

While the comparison of Conn with Alexander may appear grandiose, the use of the apologue is much less contrived and more obviously apposite and integrated in the poem than many such conventional digressions elsewhere in Classical verse. In addition, the tasteful correspondence between the four central quatrains of the uirsgéal - qq. 31-4 - and those of the exposition - qq. 37-40 - is much enhanced by the poet's depicting himself as standing by Conn's grave (q. 36) just as the philosophers stood over Alexander's. A significant difference between these two sets of quatrains is that while the former are void of any expression of emotion, each quatrain in the latter set contains one line in which the poet expresses his own sorrow.

Qq. 41-2 serve at once to sum up the substance of the preceding section and to introduce the next. For the isolation of the grave Conn has exchanged an opportunity of attaining the kingship and so, in qq. 43-8, the poet - resuming and varying the theme of the poem's opening quatrains - upbraids him for this abdication. Then, in a masterly turn (qq. 48-9),

Fearghal Óg repents of this unreasonable censure and turns, instead, to Death as the object of his reproaches. Death is seen as avenging all the triumphs which Conn had gained in his lifetime. This is an ingenious gambit as it enables Fearghal Óg to give Conn's caithréim while sustaining the sad irony, implicitly introduced by the uirsgéal, of the instant and final retribution exacted by Death, not only on Conn but also - again resuming an earlier theme - on the Conallaigh who have to bear the consequences of his death.

This juxtaposition of victory with defeat, of exultation with grief - embodied cleverly in lines such as q. 74a (cf. q. 71d n.) - is continued to the end. The final quatrain proper, q. 78, is a good instance of Fearghal Óg's mastery of the simple and straightforward statement - for other examples cf. qq. 20 and 21 - and is a fitting close to a fine elegy.³⁰

Q. 79 calls for comment. This quatrain refers to the death of Aodh Mág Aonghusa (see Poems V and VI) and therefore could not have been composed until at least some fifteen years after the death of Conn. This means that either this quatrain was included in the poem at a much later date than that of the poem's composition³¹ or that quite a considerable lapse of time occurred between the occasion of the poem and the date of its composition. I favour the former solution if only because I find it hard to imagine a poem of such force being composed in the coldness of

30 Conn is remembered in the following additional quatrain to an acephalous poem in NL Scot. MS 72.1.44, f. 38v:

Rí na ndúl dfoiridin air
anam Cuinn meic an Calbhaigh
bas do sgaith fadmag na bFionn
maith ar nar fagbhadh fuigheall.

31 As the only 'dúnadh' occurs in q. 81, it is reasonable to assume that qq. 80-81 formed part of the original composition.

retrospect.³²

Editorial remarks The poem occurs in five manuscripts: RIA MS A v I (=A), ff. 67r - 70v; RIA 24 P 27 (=P), pp. 136-45; NLI G 167 (=N), pp. 212-9; RIA 23 C 33, pp. 213-22; Maynooth M 13, pp. 127-35. As the copies of these last two (Ó Longáin) manuscripts are taken from P³³ I have not used them for this edition.

Of the three manuscripts used, the only one to which a definite date can be assigned is N which was written in 1727.³⁴ The cataloguers considered P to be 17th century and A was questioningly assigned to the 18th century, though Eleanor Knott thought it belonged to the late 17th century.³⁵ In any case, whether or not we agree with Professor Ó Concheanainn that P contains the earliest copy of our poem,³⁶ it is not the most reliable, as will be shown below and as Ó Concheanainn inadvertently demonstrates.³⁷

A, N and P are closely related in content.³⁸ All three contain major and similar collections of Uí Dhomhnaill poetry and may derive ultimately from a single and much larger duanaire. N is in part, derived from P. T.F. O Rahilly identified the latter as consisting of 'two quite distinct MSS bound together'.³⁹ The first of these, now pp. 1-24 of P, consists of an imperfect version of *Saltair na Rann*.

32 The problem of the additional quatrains in two other poems by Fearghal Óg - 'Leath re Fódla fuil Uidhir' (DMU I) and 'Cia re bhfuil Éire ag anmhuin?' (DMU II) - involves more a question of manuscript transmission than date of composition; cf. DMU pp. xiv-xv.

33 See RIA Catg., 27-8.

34 Described by T. Ó Cléirigh in Éigse i (1939) 51-61, 130-42 and by N. Ní Shéaghdha, NLI Catg., v, 8-15.

35 TD i, p. xcii.

36 Éigse xv (1973-4) 245 n. 34.

37 See q. 80c n., *infra*.

38 For other related manuscripts see Ó Cléirigh, *loc. cit.*, 81-52.

39 RIA Catg., 27.

This also forms, word for word, the first item in N and is followed there by 'Truagh liomsa a chompáin do chor', not found in P. The next eight poems in N are all found in the beginning of the second section of P, immediately after *Saltair na Rann*, and in precisely the same order. It is clear then that, with one exception, for this early part of N (pp. 9-60) the scribe was drawing directly from P. This conclusion is at variance with that of Nessa Ní Shéaghdha who saw the evidence as suggestive merely of a common exemplar.⁴⁰

The copy of our poem which is preserved in N is, however, much closer to A than to P. This can be confirmed by a close perusal of the variae lectiones: compare, for example, the identical headings, and readings such as qq. 25b, 37d, 48b, 53a, 60a and 80c. Another point, which might reinforce this observation, is that the total collection of Uí Dhomhnaill poems in A - eleven in all - is in precisely the same order in which the same poems occur in N, save that N, containing a far greater collection of material, has additional poems interspersed with those found in A; these additional poems are: the first of two copies of 'A dhún thíos atá it aonar', two poems by Tadhg Dall, two by Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa and one by Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird. On the other hand, P omits five of A's eleven poems and the remaining six are in an order entirely different to their arrangement in A and N. P also contains seven poems not found in N.

There are, however, sufficient instances where N agrees with P, against the reading of A, to suggest that N's copy is not taken from A; e.g. qq. 2b, 54b, 60b, 65c, 66c, 67a, 73c, 78c. This conclusion is supported by the occurrence in N of a handful of unique readings: e.g. qq. 38a, 49c, 56d.

40 Op. cit., 8.

The relationship between the three manuscripts is therefore complex. On the whole, I have found that A preserves the most accurate and most reliable text and I have chosen this as a basis for my edition. Variants from N and P are given in the apparatus with full discussion of the most important points in the notes.

I have deviated from the editorial principles of other poems in not indicating expansion of contractions in the apparatus save where vital to the understanding of the text. Similarly I occasionally - e.g. 14b, 53a, 59a - show variants involving length-marks where such variants are of significance.

Metre deibhidhe, dán díreach.

- 1 Fill th'aghaidh uainn a Éire,
 dlighidh sibh súr aithchéile;
 nā féach oirne a threabh Dhá Thí,
 ní fhoighbhe an fear dā bhfuiltí.

- 2 Fēach ar chuid éigin oile
 d'uaislibh innsi h-Ūghoine;
 do lán súl ní fhuil orthaibh:
 cuir do chúl re Conollchaibh.

- 3 Tabhair th'aghaidh uainn madh áil,
 tuig nach mairionn mac Siobháin,
 a chríoch bhlāth chladhsholas chorr,
 nī tráth d'amhoras orom.

1 Turn your face from us, o Éire, you should seek
 another mate; do not look on us, o house of Dá Thí,
 you will not find the man who concerns you.

2 Look on some other section of the nobles of the
 island of Ūghoine; the apple of your eye is not among
 them: turn your back on the men of Tír Chonaill.

3 If it be proper, o beautiful, curved, bright-ridged
 territory put your face from us: know that Siobhán's
 son is dead, it is no time for me to be uncertain.

Headings: Marbhnadh an Chuinn chedna do rinne Fearghal
 Óg mac Ferghoil Meic an Bhaird aoís Chriost an tan
 testa Conn an 13 Mar 1583 AN; Fearghal Óg Mac an
 Bhaird do rinne an mharbhnadhso do Chonn mac an
 Chalbhaigh P.

- 1 a haghaidh N P; c oirn P; threabh da N P; d
 Fhuighbhe N, fuigh P.
- 2 a eile N; h-Ūghoine] laoghaire N P; c bhfuil A,
 Fhuil N P; orthadh N.
- 3 a haghaidh P; b siubháin P; c chr. bh. ch. ch. N P.

- 4 Ní tráth dá iarraidh oroinn
mac ríogh sleachta saorChonoill;
teasda éanChonn Banbha Breagh,
féathlonn cabhra na gcōigeadh.
- 5 Nach gcuala Fódla go bhfoil
úir ar Chonn mac An Chalbhoigh?
re breith ríogh fhréimhe Lughaidh
ná bíodh Éire ag anumhain.
- 6 Acht gidh éigean do chrīch Chuinn
cūl do chur re cloinn gConuill,
do shaoil Banbha, bean Chobhthaigh,
fear a cabhra a Conollchaibh.

4 It is no time to seek him among us, a king's son of the progeny of noble Conall; the only Conn of Breagha's Banbha has died, woodbine which aided the provinces.

5 Has Fódla not heard that clay covers Conn son of An Calbhach? let Éire not await the counsel of the king of the stock of Lughaidh.

6 Though [now] the land of Conn must needs turn [her] back on the tribe of Conall, Banbha, Cobhthach's mate, expected her helper [to come] from the men of Tír Chonaill.

- 4 a shleachta N P; c bhanbha P; d féithlionn N.
5 ā fódhla A, fól̄la N, fodla P; bfuil N, bhfuil P; c réimhe P, freimhe N.
6 a eigin P; b chuir P; chonuill A N P; c cobhtaigh P; d chabhrā A, cabhra N P; a chonollchāibh A, a conāllchaibh N, ag conallchaibh P.

- 7 Ní mór nār imthigh Éire
tre adhbhar a h-éinchēile;
deaghail dō re cathraigh gCuinn
fa sgarthain chnó re crobhuing.
- 8 Rí Leithbhir, ón uair fár éag,
ní mhair Fódla na bhfinnghéag;
ó theasda féine 's a fear,
gan chéile feasda fuilngeadh.
- 9 Ní h-éineang ar gcúl do chuir
oighidh Chuinn mheic An Chalbhaigh:
sí ag teacht re h-Éirinn uile;
tearc créidhim a cosmhuile.

7 Éire has almost died because of him who was to be her only mate; his parting from Conn's residence was the parting of a nut from a cluster.

8 Since the king of Leithbhear has died, Fódla of the fair branches does not exist; since she herself and her husband have perished, she must endure forever without a mate.

9 The death of Conn son of An Calbhach does not occasion the decline of [just] one territory: it affects all of Éire; there is scarcely a loss comparable to it.

- 7 a imghigh P; b haoinceile P; c dedhail A N, dēghailt P; chūinn A P, cuinn N; d sgarthainn cno N.
- 8 a Riogh leithbhior P; b nír P; fódhla A, fólla N, fódla P; c a féinne A N, féine P; d céile N.
- 9 b aidhidh A, oidhidh N, oighidh P; cuinn N; d therc A, terc N P; chreidimh A, creidhim N P; chosmhuile P.

- 10 Do luigh bás flatha Feabhail
ar na ceithre cóigeadhaibh -
sgéal budh pudhar riamh reime -
's ar fhiadh Uladh d'áiridhe.
- 11 Tar Ultaibh féin, gidh iad ann,
do luigh bás craoibhe Cualann,
annomh fáidhfhile rú ag roinn,
go h-áiridhe ar chrú Chonoill.
- 12 Súil riú ag Éirionnchaibh uile
do bhí go h-éag n-éanuine;
tre eite lúidh chláir Chobhthaigh
gan shúil gcáigh re Conollchaibh.

10 The death of the prince of Feabhal - tidings which would have been a misfortune at any previous time - has oppressed the four provinces and, in particular, the territory of the Ulaidh.

11 Moreover, of the Ulster people themselves, the death of the branch of Cuala has especially oppressed the stock of Conoll; seldom [now] does a poet-seer attend them.

12 Until the death of one man, all the Irish looked to them; because of [the death of] the speeding wing of Cobhthach's plain, [now] no-one looks to the men of Tír Chonaill.

- 10 a Do luidh P; c pudhair N; rimhe P; d iath P.
11 b do luigh] do_ling N, do luidh P; chraoibhe P; dhairthe N; cconoill P.
12 b éndhuine A, énduine N P; c luith P; cobhthaigh N, ccobhthuigh P; d súil NP; cháigh A cáich N P; chonollchaibh A, cónallchaibh N P.

- 13 An tréan cēadna oirne ar-ís:
 Íoc sna breathaibh do bheirmís;
 trom linne, far-íor, oruinn,
 sinne i n-ar síol saorChonuill.
- 14 Gē tharla tnūth reimhe rinn
 ag Gaoidhealaibh fhóid Fhéilim-
 is mairg dhūinn 'na thrāth nār thuig-
 re cách ag tnúidh a-támuid.
- 15 D'éis ríogh Daoile, nār dhiúlt troid,
 linn féin gidh truagh mar támoid,
 mō ar dtruaighe don bhaile i mbíodh:
 ar n-airi uaidhe ar imshníomh.

13 The same tyranny oppresses us in turn: [that we must] pay for the judgements we were wont to mete out; alas we ourselves deem it a burden on us that we are descendants of noble Conall.

14 Though formerly the Gaoidhil of the land of Féilim were envious of us, [now] we envy everyone: it is a pity for us that we did not realise [this] in time.

15 Though we lament our plight in the wake of the lord of the Daol, who did not shirk conflict, greater is our pity for the place where he was wont to be: grief is our lot because of it.

- 13 a céenna N; oruinn P; b íoch A, íoc N P; d nar P.
 14 a tarla P; roimhe P; b gaoidhealaibh N; Fhéilim N, Fheidhlim P; c mhairg A, mairg N P; thrāth N P; d tnuth P; atamūd P.
 15 a rí N; c mbhíodh A, mbíodh N P; d uaidh P.

- 16 Teach Leithbhir na laoidheang sean,
 ní fhuil ann acht a áitsean;
 ní fhuair mé seanmóir mar soin,
 do budh neamhdhóigh é amhlóidh.
- 17 I gcúirt Leithbhir na learg bhfionn
 do-chínn urmhór fhear n-Éirionn;
 do bhí am nār saoiléadh sin:
 gan aoinfhear thall san tighsin.
- 18 Cúirt chongmhála bhfear bhfuinidh:
 uaithe, nó dā h-ionnsaighidh,
 nī clas aoinfhear re h-athaigh;
 sgaoiléadh, as, ar Ultachaibh.

16 Only his residence remains, the house of Leithbhear of the ancient ships; it would have been incredible thus [in Conn's lifetime], I have never received such a moral.

17 I used to see nearly all the men of Ireland in the court of Leithbhear of the fair slopes; [now] there is no-one in that house yonder: there was a time when that was unthinkable.

18 A court which maintained the men of the west: for [some] time no-one has been heard visiting it or [coming] from it; the Ulstermen are scattered because of it.

16 a leithbthir P; c sin N.

17 a bhfionn] slim N; b fhear N P; c amm A N, am P.

18 a congmhala P; c clōs A N P; haṯhaidh N.

- 19 Anocht gidh iomdha a h-easbhoidh,
do h-ibhthī san fhoirgneamhsoin,
cūirt ríogha na bhfonn bhfoirfe,
long fhíona re h-éanoidhche.
- 20 Gan laoidhe, gan lucht seanma,
gan teaghlach, gan tighearna;
mar tá an teachsoin is truagh linn:
budh buan a easbhaidh d'Éirinn.
- 21 Dursan liom triath an toighe
fa bhrut chriaidh, cūis eōlchoire
ní fhaca teagh mar a theagh
ní fhaca fhear mar eisean.

19 Though it wants much tonight, in that building,
royal court of the mature lands, a ship[-load] of wine
would be drunk in one night.

20 Without poems, without musicians, without a
retinue, without a chief; the state of that house is
grievous to us: its absence will have a lasting effect
on Ireland.

21 I think it calamitous [and] a cause of sorrow
that the lord of the house [is] under a mantle of
clay; I have seen no house such as his, I have seen no
man such as he.

- 19 a hiomdha A N, iomdha P; b fhoirgnedhsoin N; c
ríoghdha N; bhonn N P; bhfoirbhthe N.
20 a laoidhthe P; lucht P; c teachsin N; d easbuidh N.
21 a Dursann N; leam P; b bhrat A N P; críaidh N,
criadh P; d fear N P.

- 22 Do bhí uair nār iongnadh sin:
geall gach thoighe ag tigh Leithbhir,
geall cáigh ag triath an toighe,
nír náir le h-iath n-Úghoine.
- 23 Ní beitte dhóibh go dána:
do thuit cúirt a gcongmhála,
's do-chuaidh aoinfhear a n-íomchuir;
sgaoileadh, uaidh, ar Éirionnchaibh.
- 24 Dá chreich ar Éirinn uile:
Leithbhior gan fhiú an éanuine
is flaith luain aonar i n-úir;
an saoghal, uaidh, ní h-iontnúidh.

22 There was a time when that was no wonder: the pledge of every house with the house of Leithbhear, [and] the pledge of every man with the prince of the house, it was no shame for the land of Úghoine.

23 They should not [now] be assertive: the court which sustained them has fallen, and the one man who supported them has gone; because of it the Irish are scattered.

24 Two calamities upon all of Ireland: Leithbhior without even one person and an heroic (?) prince alone in [the] earth; [this] life is unenviable because of it.

- 22 a iongnamh N; b toighe N P; tigh] P, teagh A, teach N; c cáigh P; d ní P; nár N; úghoine A, ugoine N, iughoine P.
- 23 a beite dóibh N; b do thuit] N P, do thuig A; c a n-] om. N; imachúir N; d air N.
- 24 a Dhá N; b leithbhior N P; fiú N P; énduine A N, éunnduine P; c aonar] P, a aonar A N.

- 25 Flaitheas ní bhí gan bhearnadh;
dā féin is fāth doimheanman -
nach truagh cēile chuain Leithbhir ? -
Éire uaidh nī h-ainmnighthir.
- 26 Annamh thigdís as a thigh:
nír chomaoín dóibh a dhéinimh;
nír taobhadh ē re h-athaigh,
sé a aonar ō Ultachaibh.
- 27 D'éis a éaga, amhlaidh soín,
Alasdar, airdrí an domhoin -
ní bhí an saoghal acht fa seach -
do bhí a aonar go h-uaigneach.

25 Is not the spouse of Leithbhear's shore to be pitied ? - without him there is no mention of Éire, to her followers it is a cause of despondency; every rule must come to an end.

26 Seldom did they leave his house: they were not obliged to; no-one has come near it for [some] time, he is alone, parted from the Ulstermen.

27 Similarly, after his death, Alexander, supreme king of the world, was all alone: [this] world is only temporary.

- 25 a bearnadh N P; b da fhéin A N, leis féin P; fath a P; c leibhthir P; d uaidh] P, uadh A N; hainmnighthar N, hainmnighthior P.
- 26 a do thigdís P; chomaoín] N, chommaoin A, chumaoín P; c taobhadh] N P, thaobhadh A; d na aonar P.
- 27 a Tār éis P; sin N; b ardrí N, airdrigh P; c saoghal N P.

- 28 An domhan ó mhuir go muir
ar son gur chuir fa chomhthaibh -
créad acht cás bróin do bhrosdadh? -
ar bhás níor fhóir Alasdar.
- 29 I ndiaidh a bháis ar an mbioth,
cuirthear Alasdar uaibhrioch
i gcraidh mar gach n-aon oile,
an chraobh do chraidh chumhraidhe
- 30 D'ēis a adhlaicthe, mās fhíor,
tigid ar uaigh an airdríogh -
do-gheabhthar leam a labhra -
ceathrar dob fhearr n-ealadhna.

28 Despite [the fact] that he conquered the world
from sea to sea, it did not save Alasdar from death;
what is it but a case whereby sadness is aroused?

29 After his worldly death^{próid} Alexander, the tree sprung
from fragrant soil, is buried in earth like everyone
else.

30 After his burial, if it be true, to the grave of
the supreme king come four most learned men; what they
said is known to me.

- 28 b chomhthaibh N P; d níor] ní P.
29 a ndiaigh P; mbioth] N P, mbhioth A; b curthar N;
c chraobh N P; chraidh P, craidh N.
30 a fhíor P, fíor N.

- 31 'Gé t̄a a-níodh gan neach fān ghréin,
do bhí a-né,' ar duine dhíbhseín,
'nír dhual gan adhradh don fhíor,
sluagh an talmhan 'na thimchiol.'
- 32 'Gan aige a-níú,' ar neach oile,
'acht seacht dtroighthe talmhaidhe,
's do bhí an chruinne chē gan chleith
a-né uile ar a éinbhreith.'
- 33 ''Na mharcach ar talmhain tigh
do bhí,' ar fáidh do na fáidhibh,
'trom do luigh a h-uille air,
an chruinne ar mhuin a marcaigh.'

31 'Though today he is without anyone under the sun,
yesterday,' said one of them, 'the host of the earth
was around him, it was not natural for the man to be
without a following.'

32 'Today,' said another, 'he possesses only seven
feet of earth, and, yesterday, this entire world was
manifestly under his control alone.'

33 'He was a rider on the solid earth,' said one of
the soothsayers, 'heavily has she oppressed him, the
world on the back of her rider.'

- 31 a Ge atá N; níodh P; ghréin N, gréin P; b díbhseín
P; d sluaigh N; talmhan N, P.
- 32 a aníodh N, aníúdh P; b ttroighthe N P; talmhoighe
P; c chruinne N P; chleith N P.
- 33 a talmhain N P; c do luidh P; d muin N P; a] an P.

- 34 'Rí an bheatha lē mbronntaoi ór,'
do ráidh neach dhíobh tre dhobróin,
'maraidh an t-ór 'na ionadh';
glór lē bhfaghair foillsioghadh.
- 35 Ós chionn Alasduir oirrdhreic
glór na n-ughdar n-uasoilghlic,
sé ag buain ribh, a rí Bearnais,
gan sibh ar tí an tighearnais.
- 36 Briathra an cheathrair cian ó shoin
reacfa mē, a mheic An Chalbhoigh,
ó's dúinn is cháir teacht taraibh,
lāimh ret fheart, a n-ionnshamhail.

34 'The king of the world by whom gold was wont to be distributed,' said one of them sadly, 'the gold remains in his place'; a speech whereby one obtains enlightenment.

35 The speech of the learned men, noble and wise, above illustrious Alexander, applies to you, o king of Bearnas, [in that] you are no longer striving for the lordship.

36 By your grave, o son of An Calbhach, I will recite words such as those uttered by the four long ago, since it is proper for us to treat of you.

- 34 a Rígh P; b dhíbh N, díobh P; dhubhrón P; c mairidh N, mairigh P; d bfaghar N; foillsiughadh NP.
- 35 a cionn NP; oirdeirc N, oirrdhirc P; b nuasalghlic N; c rígh P.
- 36 a Briathra NP; cherthair N; b mé] om. P; mhic P; c cóir ANP; thoruibh P; d ret] let P; fheart NP; ionnshamhail N, ionnamhail P.

- 37 Urmhór cáich, a ghruaidh mar ghrís,
fād smacht, a Chuinn, do-chímís,
gé a-taoi it aonar i n-úir uainn;
an saoghal dúinn is diomuidh.
- 38 Gidh mór gcríoch do cosnadh libh,
gan agat d'inis Éibhir
acht seacht dtroighe, gidh truagh linn;
budh buan a oire ar m'intinn.
- 39 Id mharcach, a dhreagain Dor,
do bhí tusa ar tuinn talmhon;
tug sé ar mo thuirsi toigheacht,
cré ar do mhuinsi ag marcaigheacht.

37 We used to see virtually everyone under your power,
o Conn, o cheek like fire, thought [now] you are away
from us, alone in [the] earth; life is a misfortune for
us.

38 Though we regret it, you [now] possess only seven
feet of the island of Éibhear though many were the
territories won by you; it will weigh on my mind
forever.

39 O dragon of Dor, you were a rider on the earth's
surface; [that] the earth is [now] riding on your back
has caused my sorrow to swell.

- 37 a cháich P; ghruaidh NP; ghrís NP; b do-chimhís P;
c taoi NP; san úir P; uainn] NP, uaín A; d saoghal
NP; dhúinn N, dúin P; diombuaidh AN, dimbuain P.
- 38 a cosnamh-ribh N; b agad NP, éimhir ANP; c acht] as
P; dtroighthe ANP; d budh] bú N; mhinntinn NP.
- 39 a It AN, Ad P; mharcach N; dhreagain] N, dreaghan
A, dhreghon P; b talmhon repeated in margin A; c
toigheacht] P toidheacht AN; d mhuin P.

- 40 An t-ór do bhronnta, a bhas seang
ar son clú, d'éigsibh Éireann,
cosg mar so ar mo bhrón ní bhí,
ag so an t-ór is ní fhuiltí.
- 41 An bioth cé ar éanbhrat 's ar uaigh
tugadh leis uile i n-éanuair;
rí na cruinne, gā dtám dhó,
lán an uile dá iargnó.
- 42 Ríghe ar sheacht dtroighthibh tug sibh,
do nós Alasdair uaibhrigh;
a rí dār gealladh clár Cuirc,
crádh do mhealladh san mhaluirt.

40 O slender hand, the gold which you were wont to
bestow on the poets of Ireland, for the sake of fame,
here is the gold and you are not; my grief is thus
inextinguishable.

41 In one instant he thoroughly exchanged this world
for a single shroud and a grave; in short, everyone is
consumed with mourning for him, the king of the world.

42 In the manner of proud Alexander you exchanged a
kingdom for seven feet [of earth] ; o king to whom the
plain of Corc was promised, that you were deceived in
the exchange is agony [to me] .

40 a sheang NP.

41 c rígh NP.

42 a thug P; b uaibhrigh NP; c righ P; d mhealladh N,
mealladh P; maluirt NP.

- 43 A mheic airdríogh Easa Ruaidh,
mairg do reac Fhódla ar éanuaigh;
bráighde is comha uainne ar ais,
mo thruaighe an rogha rugais.
- 44 A mheic Í Dhomhnaill dhúin Bhreagh,
do mheath tú dóigh mhac Míleadh;
gan díon Gaidheal i ndán duit
níor saoilleadh le clár gCormuic.
- 45 Tusa is chiontaighe, a chiabh lag:
ní h-í nach anfadh agad -
ní créidhim nach ba cumhain -
re h-Éirinn nír anubhair.

43 O son of the supreme ruler of Eas Ruadh, alas [for him] who bartered Fódla for a single grave; hostages and ransoms are [now] returned from us, sad is the choice you made.

44 O son of Ó Domhnaill of the fort of Breagha, you have destroyed the hope of the sons of Míl; the plain of Cormac never imagined that the protecting of the Gaidhil was not your destiny.

45 O soft-haired one, it is you who are most to blame: you did not wait for Éire, it is not she who would not stay with you; it is not a calamity which will be forgotten.

- 43 a m^hic NP; airdríogh ANP; easa] P, eassa AN; b fól^la N; c comhtha P; ar] tar P; d thruaighe NP.
- 44 a m^hic N, meic P; dhomhnuill NP; bregh N, bhreagh P; b mac P; c gaidheal N, ghaidheal P; dhuit NP; d cormuic P, corbmuic AN.
- 45 a Thusa N, Tu P; cionntach P; c créidhim] NP, créidhimh A; cumhail P.

- 46 Mairg nár an riú, leath at leath,
Cruacha, Eamhain is Oileach,
is cnuic mhíne mhoighe Breagh,
is ríge thoighe Tailltean.
- 47 Mairg nár an, a chnú chridhe,
re Muaidh, re sruth Sligighe,
re Búill, re Bóinn, re Bearnas;
ní cóir tnúidh re tighearnas.
- 48 Nach truagh mh'aithbhear ar th'fholt fhann
fa imtheacht uainn a anam? -
a ghéag ón falamh gach fiodh,
faghadh an t-éag a aithbhior!

46 Alas [for him] who did not wait for them: Cruacha, Eamhain, and Oileach, and the smooth hills of the plain of Breagha, and the sovereignty of the house of Taillte, respectively.

47 O heart's nut, alas [for him] who did not wait for the Muadh, for the river Sligeach, for the Búill, for the Bóinn, for Bearnas; it is not proper to strive for the kingship [under such circumstances].

48 O soul, is it not sad that I reproach your smooth hair for leaving us? - o branch, because of whom every wood is bare, let Death receive the blame for it!

- 46 b is eamhuin P; c mhuighe P; d taillteann P.
47 a chnú NP; chroidhe P; b sligidhe P; d tñuith P;
tighearnas NP.
48 a maithbhir N, maibhthir P; tfholt fann NP; b
timtheacht P; d faghadh N, faghaidh P;

- 49 Do-chuaidh ag an éag oraibh,
dod dheóin noch a dearnobhair
sgaradh ruinn, a chnú chroidhe:
ní tú a Chuinn is chiontaighe.
- 50 Fir Éireann, acht an t-éag féin,
ní rachadh aca d'éinmhéin
ort, a dhreagain ó dhún Bhreagh
dob eagail ar cúl chaoilshleagh.
- 51 Ort, a éigne Easa Ruaidh,
do dhíoghoil an t-éag éanuaire-
trom do-chuaidh ar fhiadh n-Uladh-
gach buaidh riamh dá rugabhar.

49 Death prevailed over you, not willingly did you leave us, o heart's nut: it is not you, o Conn, who is most to blame.

50 The men of Ireland could not prevail over you, only Death itself [could], o dragon from Breagha's fort who was feared behind slender spears.

51 O salmon of Eas Ruadh, in an instant Death has requited you for every victory which you ever won; it has heavily oppressed the land of the Ulaidh.

49 b dot ANP; dearnobhair] NP, ndernobhair A; c rinn N; d ciontuighe N, cionntoighe P.

50 a éireann] NP, eareann A; c dhreagain] N, dhreaghain AP; dhuin P; breagh NP; d caoilshleagh NP.

51 a easa] P, eassa A,N; c fiadh N, iath P; d do rugabhair N, da rugabhar P.

- 52 Trom do dhíoghail an t-éag ort
creach ród ó Chruachoin Chonnocht,
smual id deaghaidh fán mBaoill mbuig:
deabhaidh dā taoibh ní thánuig.
- 53 Síol Samhradháin, dā sléacht coill,
briseadh orra i n-Áth Chonoill;
gur dhíoghail th'éag, a ghlac gheal,
féag, le ríoghaibh mhac Míleadh.
- 54 Do díoghladh let éag uile:
bhar sirthe fán Srádbhaile -
beag nach meath dhúinne do dhol -
agus creach Dhúine Dealgon.

52 Heavily did death avenge on you a plunder before
you from Cruacha of Connacht, a fire behind you around
the gentle Baoill: no dispute came of it.

53 Síol Samhradháin, before whom a wood bends low,
they were defeated in Áth Conaill; o white hand, see
how your death is deemed a requital by the kings of
the sons of Míl.

54 All were avenged by your death: your raidings
round Srádbhaile - your death is well nigh our
destruction - and the plunder of Dún Dealgan.

- 52 a dhioghail NP; b rómhad N; ch. ch. NP; c
dheaghaigh NP; m̄bh. mbh. A, mb. mb. NP; d̄ thaoibh
P; tháinig N thanuigh P.
- 53 a do shleacht P; b ortha P; conaill NP; d̄ fégh NP;
mac P.
- 54 a thécc N; b bhar siortha NP; c meath] creach P;
dhúine P; d̄ agus] P et AN; creacha P.

- 55 Gan díoghail ní dheachaidh soin:
 ̄ Loch soir ar-īs d'argoin,
 agus críoch Oirghiall uile,
 's ̄ Choirrshliabh go Cúlmhaine.
- 56 Cuairt Tíre Fiachrach ar fad,
 creach Innsi Cua, cuairt Fhánad,
 do dhíoghail an t-éag uile,
 a ghéag d'fhíonfhuil Ūghoine.
- 57 Creach Bealaigh Nid, tar neart gcáigh,
 creach bhaoghlach Bhaili an tSacáin,
 a rogha séad sídhe Breagh,
 do-ríne an t-éag a n-aithbhear.

55 That did not go unavenged: the raiding again of [the area] eastwards from Loch, and the entire territory of Oirghialla, and from Coirrshliabh to Cúlmuine.

56 The circuit of all of Tír Fhiachrach, the plundering of Inis Chua, the circuit of Fánad, Death has avenged all, o scion of the noble blood of Ūghoine.

57 The sack of Bealach Nid, overcoming the strength of all, the dangerous raid of Baile an tSacáin, o [most] choice of the marvellous jewels of Breagha, Death has reproached them.

- 55 a díoghail NP; c agus] P et AN; d choirrshliabh NP.
 56 ā thíre NP; b creacha P; c dhioghail NP; fhíonfhuil] N fhionnfhuil AP.
 57 a bhealaigh NP; cáigh AN, caich P; d do rinne AN do rigne P; a n] á P; aithbhear] NP aithbhir A.

- 58 Do dīoghladh ar-aon oraibh,
Cois Cloiche do chreachobhair,
ar dteacht slán uathaibh tar ais,
lámh um na Tuathaibh tugais.
- 59 I lár chogaidh - fa cuairt te -
do chreach tú na trí h-aibhne;
mar sin, a ghéag ó Bhóinn Bhreagh,
nār chóir don éag a aithbhear?
- 60 Ní diongna a aithbhi ar t'fholt tiogh,
deireadh sluaigh ort le h-éigean
ó chrích iobhraigh bhinn Bhanna
go Finn sriobhghloin séaghanna.

58 You plundered Cois Cloiche [and] you attacked the Tuatha; having returned safely from them, they were both avenged on you.

59 In the midst of battle - it was a warm circuit - you raided the three rivers; thus, o scion from the Bóinn of Breagha, was it not proper for Death to avenge it?

60 It is no wonder that it should be avenged on you, your violent position at the rear of a hosting from the sweet, yew-abundant Banna to the magnificent Finn of the clear currents.

- 58 a Do] in right-hand margin A; b ag teacht P.
59 a I] Ar P; cogaidh NP; chuairt NP; té A the N the P; c bhóin P; bhreagh NP; d nár] níor P.
60 a dhiongna AN dhioghnadh P; a] om. P; aithbhir N aibhther P; tiugh P; b le] re NP; heigin P; c iubhraigh NP; d shriobhghloin NP; séaghanda A, shéaghanda N, shéaghonna P.

- 61 Creach Beann mBoirche, a bharr falláin,
creach Oiligh, creach Chaorthannáin,
fa-ríor nochar léigeadh libh;
ríomh ní h-éidear ar th'airgnibh.
- 62 Do díoghladh ar do dhreich ghloin
gleó an Lagáin, nó lá An Iobhoir,
nō Sliabh Fuaid, ar n-uair, d'fhoghail,
nó ruaig uaibh fān Eóghanaigh;
- 63 Nō creach mhór Mhoighe h-Eine,
nō an treas re taobh Suilighe,
nó comhtha is géill cláir Chobhthaigh,
nō léim cáigh san gCobharthaigh;

61 The raid of Beanna Boirche, o luxuriant hair, the
raid of Oileach and of Caorthannán, alas they were not
conceded to you[without requital] ; your plunderings
are impossible to enumerate.

62 On your bright countenance was avenged the battle
of the Lagan or the day of An Iobhar, or the
plundering, afterwards, of Sliabh Fuaid, or your
raiding around the Eoghanach;

63 Or the great raid of Magh Eine, or the battle
beside Suileach, or the ransoms and hostages of
Cobhthach's plain, or the jumping of all into the
Cobharthach;

- 61 a bheann NP; c libh] leat N; d heisder A heidir NP.
62 a díoghladh NP; dhreich NP; ghloin N; b iubhair P.
63 a mhor NP; mhuighe NP; b suilidhe NP; c chláir NP;
ccobhthaigh P; d léim] NP leimh A; sa chobharthaigh
P.

- 64 Nō creach An Chaisléin Riabhaigh,
 nó Cill Eala d'aithiarraidh,
 nó grís uaibh um Áth Seanaigh,
 nō buaidh ghnáth ó Ghaoidhealaibh;
- 65 Nó cinneadh dhuit, a dhreach náir,
 ar shíol Suibhne i gCill Challáin,
 biaidh feasd im chroidhe a cuimhne,
 a fhleasg mhoighe Modhuirne;
- 66 Nō creach sleachta Airt uile,
 nō creach chríche Dartraighe,
 nó, no, ruaig Dhoire, a bharr Breagh;
 barr oire, uaid, ar m'aigneadh.

64 Or the plundering of An Caisléan Riabhach, or the second attack on Cill Eala, or the fire caused by you about Áth Seanaigh, or victory always conceded to you by the Gaoidhil;

65 Or, o noble countenance, your defeat of the race of Suibhne in Cill Challáin, ever will its memory be in my heart, o branch of the plain of Modhuirn.

66 Or the plundering of the entire race of Art, or of the territory of Dartraidhe, or, moreover, the attack on Doire, o summit of Breagha; because of you there is an increased weight on my mind.

64 b daithiarraigh P.

65 a nár N; b chealláin P; c ccuimhne N ccoimhne P; d fhleasg NP; moghuirne N.

66 a creacha P; shleachta N sleacht P; c no] om. NP; doire NP; d uaidh P.

- 67 Biaidh fós a chuimhne im chridhe:
do chreach tú, tús aimsire,
na tíre im Theach an Teampla,
a dhreach shíde, shoineanta
- 68 Maidhm mór Móna na Cille,
lór d'ísliughadh m'inntinne
beith dā iomrádh, a fhir Bhreagh;
mar sin ní h-iomlán m'aigheadh
- 69 Tír Eóghain do h-airgeadh libh
ōn Chaol go Banna mbinnghil -
mór gcríoch nárbh inleighis uadh -
do imdhighis ar éansluagh.

67 Its memory will still be in my heart: you raided,
at the beginning, the territories around Teach an
Tearpla, o peaceful, cheerful countenance.

68 The great victory of Moin na Cille, mentioning it
is enough to depress my spirit, o lord of Breagha;
therefore my mind is not whole.

69 Tír Eóghain was raided by you from An Caol to the
sweet and bright Banna - because of it many
territories were beyond help - you defeated an entire
army.

- 67 a a] ar NP; chridhe] NP chroidhe A; d shíthi N;
shoinenta P.
- 68 b mhintinne N; c bheith P; breagh NP.
- 69 b mbinnghil] NP mhbinnghil A; d imghidhis P;
ensluagh NP.

- 70 Baile Leithbhir na learg ngeal,
do ghabh tú dā uair eisean,
is Dún na nGall uair oile:
barr uaidh ar ar n-eölchoire.
- 71 Caisléan na Finne, feidhm cruaidh,
do ghabh tusa é an athuair;
soraidh le bhar neart a-níodh,
teacht tar th'fhoghail ní h-éidior.
- 72 Do beanadh leat, a fhlaith Dor,
seacht longa d'uaislibh Albion -
mé ag luadh do chaithréime, a Chuinn -
a luagh d'aithmhéile oruinn.

70 The town of Leithbhear of the bright slopes, you captured that twice, and Dún na nGall on another occasion: our grief is increased thereby.

71 You yourself recaptured Caisléan na Finne, a hard battle; I bid farewell to your strength today, it is impossible to mention your raiding.

72 By you were smitten, o prince of Dor, seven ships of Scottish nobles - I am recounting your martial career, o Conn - we are paying for this with our sorrow.

- 70 a leibhthir P; ngheal P; b dhá P; eiséin N; c eile N; d air ar P.
71 c soraigh P; d tar] ar P; heidir P.
72 d luach P.

73 Le h-éanurchor, aithnidh dhamh,
lā deabhtha Droichid Ch̄aradh,
rugais buadh, a ch̄leath Ch̄earmna;
truagh do theach gan tighearna.

74 Cuimhne th'éacht ní h-éidir dhamh:
mac Í Chatháin, céim docar,
do ghabhabhar, a ghruadh nāir;
tuar anfhaladh a adhmháil.

75 Cuairt an Rúta ō mhuir go muir,
Machaire Eabha d'arguin:
a bhile toraidh bheann mBreagh,
leam is omhain a n-áireamh.

73 It is known to me that, on the day of the battle
of Droichead Caradh, you gained victory with one shot,
o tree of Cearmna; sad is your house without a chief.

74 It is difficult for me to recall your
achievements: you captured the son of Ó Catháin, a
difficult deed, o noble cheek; it is an omen of enmity
to admit it.

75 The circuit of the Rúta from sea to sea, the
ravaging of Machaire Eabha: o fruit-tree of the hills
of Breagha, I fear to enumerate them.

73 a aithne N; b dhroichid P; caradh NP; c buaidh NP;
c̄leth N chleth P; cremhna N chermna P.

74 b mhac P; dochair N; c ghabhabhair ANP; ghruaidh
NP.

75 b eabha] P abha AN; d omhan NP.

- 76 Rugais uatha - nír fheidhm nár -
is Clann Chonoill i gCruachán,
a ghéag phailme nár mheath mionn,
raighne a n-each, ní ós ísioll.
- 77 A ua Aodha nár éar sgoil,
lā catha Chilli Tuathoil,
do bhris tusa an ruaig romhuibh
uaid gurbh usa anomhain.
- 78 Cur le h-áiríomh th'éacht uile
ní h-éidir le h-éanuine;
a ursa sluagh mhoighe Máil,
lem chroidhe is truagh do theasdáil.

Fill.

76 And Clann Chonoill in Cruachán, not furtively did you take from them - it was no shameful undertaking - the choicest of their horses, o palm-branch who broke no oath.

77 O descendant of Aodh who did not refuse a poetry-school, on the day of the battle of Cill Tuathoil, you scattered all before you so that it would have been more convenient to shun you.

78 No-one can dispute the complete enumeration of your exploits; o support of the hosts of the plain of Máil, my heart is saddened by your death.

76 b cruachan P; c mheath] mhuigh P; d roighne NP; íosóil P.

77 b chatha P; d uaidh P.

78 a le] re N; b hénduine ANP; c sluaigh NP; mhuighe NP; d chroidhesí N; Fill] om. P.

- 79 D'éis Méig Aonghusa uair bhlaidh,
cead liom gan bheith i mbeathaidh;
do thréig mē gach aoinfhear air:
nár mhaoidhear é ar a anmain.
- 80 A Chuinn thoir do thuirsinh mē,
's a Chuinn thiar, re taobh mBúille,
m'fhāth truaighe ibh re ar-oile,
sibh uainne gan ionghoire.
- 81 A Pheadair absdoil éisd mē:
clann Ādhaimh ór fhās sinne,
gidh ionann rún damh is di,
mo thal ar gcúl ní chuirfi.
Fill thaghaidh uainn.

79 After Mág Aonghusa who achieved fame, I am content not to be alive; I abandoned everyone for him: may his soul not be reproached for it.

80 O Conn yonder who has saddened me, and o Conn behind, beside the Búill, you together are the cause of my misery, you are gone from us and unattended.

81 O apostle Peter hear me: though I and the family of Adam, from which we are descended, be of one nature, do not spurn my affection.

- 79 a Mheg NP; aongusa P; fuair AP fhuair N; bladh N
blaidh P; b lem N; gan a bheith N; um bhethaigh P;
d maoiter N; a] om. P.
- 80 a thuirsinh NP; b re] le N; búille ANP; c fath mo
thruaighe P; roile P.
- 81 a apstoil AN easpoil P; c dhamh NP; d thol A thoil
NP; chuirfi A chuirfi NP.

IV Notes

1 d For the idiom atá di see DIL A, 471.52.

2 b h-Úghoine Note that N and P read Laoghairé. Either reading would be acceptable; that of A provides extra alliteration and, for what it is worth, is attested elsewhere in the poetry of Fearghal Óg: DMU II.52b.

c fhuil (bhfuil A) The metre shows that the eclipsis in the manuscript reading cannot be correct; cf. Poem II.4d n.

3 b mac Siobháin The only wife of An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill, Conn's father, about whom we have any information is Catherine MacLean, daughter of Eachann Mór and former wife of the fourth Earl of Argyll; see A. MacLean Sinclair, The Clan Gillean, 102-3 (Hayes-McCoy, Scots merc., 150-51, makes her a daughter of 'Lachlan MacLean the elder'). However, Siobhán may have been the name of An Calbhach's first wife. She was a daughter of Toirdhealbhach Luineach's father, Niall Conallach Ó Néill (d. 1544). See Lambeth Palace Library MS 635, f. 31r.

4 b mac ríogh (cf. Poem VII. 7a) See Simms, From kings to warlords, 57, where this term is defined as 'the king's son who was not expecting to succeed'. Clearly Conn had other ideas (see Introduction).

c éanChonn Here Fearghal Óg may be playing

on the different meanings of conn 'leader, chief' and 'reason, sense'.

5 a Nach gcuala Perhaps this eclipsis (cf. q. 2c n.) should not be permitted in an edition such as this, but I have allowed it to stand as it is the only instance of the negative interrogative plus verb in the collection edited here. I find no instruction on the subject in the tracts but there is a precedent for such eclipsis in Old Irish, see Thur. Gramm., 291.

The negative conjunction and negative relative nach are a different matter, it seems to me. The development of eclipsis following this took place within the Early Modern period itself: see O Rahilly, Irish dialects, 39-44 and Celtica xiv (1981) 179. Down to the middle of the seventeenth century, such eclipsis was selective, cf. the scribal practice of Aodh Ó Dochartaigh as set out in DF iii, 301. Though here again a definite ruling is wanting in the tracts, it seems unlikely that such practice would have been countenanced by the creators of the standardized language. For this reason I have not shown eclipsis in the edited texts of the examples occurring in this collection, e.g. Poems V. 32b and VII. 11c, IX. 13d.

Fódla The form of this word is fixed by the seemingly invariable rime with fógra; e.g. Aith. D 16.2cd, POR XIX.8cd, TD 16.47cd, L Branach lines 681-2.

b mac an Chalbhoigh An Calbhach, son of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill, was head of his family for a brief period from 1563 until his death in November 1566.

c Lughaidh Of the septs of Ceinéal Conaill,

the Uí Dhomhnaill belonged to Síol Lugdach meic Sétnai; cf. Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 13; Corp. Gen., 164.

At IGT i. 157 and ii. 21 lenition is proscribed after a gen. sg. masc. ending in a 'consuine comhuidheach', that is the gen. sg. of a masc. noun with a consonantal declension. The example given in IGT ii is mac filedh gil. Rí, gen. sg. ríogh, belongs to this class and we should therefore expect non-lenition in the present instance, but the metre requires lenition; cf. Poem V. 77b.

Lenition after gen. sg. longer than its nom. sg. form is also proscribed at the same locations in the tracts and at BST 226.19 ff. Yet we have an instance at Poem V. 16c where lenition is metrically necessary.

It seems reasonable to conclude that these two rules should be modified to allow for either lenition or non-lenition.

6 a For acht giodh see Poem II. 29c n.

Chuinn 'the land of Conn' i.e. Ulster or Ireland, the Conn in question being Conn Céadchathach, but a pun is probably intended as in q. 7c.

7 d The sense of cnó here seems to be as in phrases such as cnú ós chrobhaing, that is, the topmost fruit, the best nut.

8 a For Leithbhear see q. 15c n. *infra*.

c féinne of A and N seems to have been construed as some sort of derivative of féin(n)idh 'a

warrior'. But P here seems to possess the most accurate reading, féine being a variant of féin; cf. Poem V. 10c, Di. D 2.12c, DMU IV. 15c.

9 c The independent subject pronoun sé/sí at the head of a clause, with the substantive verb unexpressed, is not exceptional; cf. qq. 26d and 35c and TD 3.46c.

For ag teacht re see DIL D, 381.36-51.

10 a Feabhail (nom. Feabhal) The river Foyle which marks the boundary between Tír Chonaill and Tír Eoghain and enters Lough Foyle at Derry. Lifford castle stood on its banks, see q. 15.

11 a giodh iad ann This idiom is noted in TD ii, 211.

c The translation attempts to bring out the two meanings of this line: that poets seldom spend time with the Conallaigh and do not compose poems for them (cf. 'Roinnfiod m'éigsi re hArt Óg' LCAB XXXIV. 1a).

12 c I interpret this line as having an implicit verb noun (cf. IGT i. 76), e.g. 'tre eite lúidh ... do dhol '. Eite lúidh, lit. 'wing of speed', is used figuratively in the sense of 'hero, warrior' etc. For the progression from the literal meaning to the figurative cf. 'bheith mar eó gan eite lúidh/ nír bheite dúinn re beó Briain' (POR XXXVIII. 17cd) and 'eite lúith na laochraidhe/ Cú Chulainn

críche Connacht' (ibid. VIII. 10ab). For more abstract figurative uses cf. Di. D 21a.9c, Aith. D 67.27c n.

súil: lúidh: shúil is an instance of 'breacadh', see Breacadh 24(a), 25(i)-(iv).

d For eclipsis of MS cháigh see General Introduction.

13 a arís and faríor (in c) may alliterate on r- or on a vowel; cf. BST 212.15.

b This idea of requital for former supremacy forms the theme of the caithréim later in the poem.

14 b fhóid Lenition after dat. pl. is incorrect (IGT i. 158) but this example is an instance of 'sléagar' and is metrically necessary.

For Féilim see Poem II. 7d n.

c Perhaps we should translate 'na thráth as 'in his [sc. Conn's] time'.

15 a Daoile (nom. Daol) The river Deelee which joins the Foyle about one mile north of Lifford.

b mar támoid Omission of the proclitic a- is regular after mar (cf. gé, q. 31a n. infra), e.g. mar tá q. 20c infra, DMU VIII. 31d, mar támaid TD 18.1d. Otherwise, such elision is not permitted, cf. IGT v. 149. In the prose of the period the proclitic particle is more frequently left unelided, cf. Desid., xxxi.

c don bhaile i mbíodh The reference is to Leithbhear (cf. q. 8a), or Lifford, near the confluence of the rivers Finn and Foyle, some fifteen miles down river from Derry, on the border between Tír Chonaill and Tír Eoghain. It is not surprising to find that this strategic site was ever a source of contention between the Í Dhomhnaill and the Í Néill.

Such contention marked its foundation when, in the summer of 1527, Maghnas Ó Domhnaill completed the construction 'etir obair cloiche, chroinn 7 cláraigh 7 Ua Néill a ccocadh fair'.¹ When Maghnas died on 9 February 1563, in Lifford castle, his achievement was proudly recalled: '... isin mbaile do rónadh laisiumh cétus d'aimhdheoin Í Néill 7 chenél Eóghain'.²

In between, Maghnas had not only to contend with Seaán Ó Néill³ but with his own rebellious son, An Calbhach (see q. 5b n.), to whom Lifford was officially granted in 1549⁴ after a war between him and his father.⁵

Given this long history of contention the statement, in q. 70b *infra*, that Conn recaptured the castle on two occasions is not surprising. After Conn's death it was occupied by Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill where he was constantly opposed by Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill.⁶ The castle was destroyed by fire in 1600 when Conn's son, Niall Garbh, took the town for the English for the first time.⁷ No trace of the castle remains today, and even its location is uncertain.⁸

1 AFM v, 1390.

2 *Ibid.* v, 1596.

3 Cal. Carew MSS 1515-1574, 314.

4 *Ibid.*, 20-22.

5 Cf. AFM v, 1486, 1504.

6 E.g., *ibid.* vi, 1934.

7 Misc. Celt. Soc., 246.

8 Arch. Surv., 350. There is a plan of the town of Lifford in SP 63/207/6, f. 219r.

The following eleven quatrains consist of an elegy on the castle which is now empty (see q. 16n.) because of Conn's death. Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, who enjoyed Conn's patronage (see the additional quatrain on Lifford in his poem praising Eniskillen Castle, TD 11.40), composed two short poems in praise of Lifford.⁹ In both he praises the hospitality of the house and of its owner. He compares Lifford to other legendary centres of hospitality - Eamhain Mhacha, Cruacha, Teamhair - and describes the feasting and entertaining which took place there.

Fearghal Óg's description is different in character. Certainly he alludes to the hospitality (qq. 18, 26) and to the entertainments (qq. 19, 20), but he does so by contrasting what was with what is in a manner reminiscent of Maol Muire Mac an Bhaird's lament for Donegal Castle.¹⁰ This description by negatives, with an Ubi sunt? flavour, reaches its climax with the moving quatrains 21 and 26 where Conn is equated with his castle. This contrast between past and present develops naturally into the Alexander apologue, qq. 27ff.

d uaidhe We might also translate this as 'because of him'.

16 b If áitsean refers to the site of the castle it might suggest that the poem was composed sometime after 1600 and so offer an alternative explanation for the closing quatrains. On the other hand, it could still be taken metaphorically, reflecting the poet's view, expressed in subsequent

9 TD 5; IBL xxiii (1935) 5-6.

10 MD 56.

quatrains, that because of Conn's death, the castle at Lifford, with which the poet was acquainted, is no more.

17 b Lenition of fear is necessary for alliteration and is an instance of 'sléagar'.

18 a bhfear bhfuinidh The eclipsis on fear is irregular but not unprecedented. It is clearly caused by the influence of the correct eclipsis of the following word. Cf. Éigse iii (1941-2) 170.17d, TD i, p. cii, TD ii, 245.25 n. Fuineadh is vb. n. of fuinidh 'sets, sinks' and is used as a name for Ireland in formulae such as fiadh fuinidh MD 52.20b, inis fhuinidh TD 10.11b etc., literally 'land of the setting sun'. By extension it means 'the west'; cf. 's ós imperibh gá dtáim ribh/ an oirrthir is an fhuinidh' Iomarbhágh XVI. 123ab. Thus 'men of Ireland' would also be an acceptable translation here.

d For the given meaning of as see DIL A, 6.85-6 and cf. q. 23d infra.

This quatrain contains a reversal of the idea, expressed in TD 5.8 and infra q. 26ab, of all of Ireland visiting the castle and no-one being able to leave because of the supreme generosity of the host.

19 d (Cf. 'Leithbhior na bhfleadh bhfíndearg' Celtica xvi (1984) 69.13b.) While there may be an element of exaggeration in this line, the appetite of the Conallaigh for wine seems to have been well-known as instances such as the circumstances of the abduction of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill in 1587

attest. Conn's father, Maghnas, was described in 1560 as the 'best lord of fish in Ireland and he exchangeth fish always with foreign merchants for wine, by which he is called in other countries the king of fish' Cal. Carew MSS 1515-1574, 308. For the importation of wine in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries see Nicholls, Gaelic and gaelicized Ireland, 119; for wine-consumption see K. Simms in RSAL Jn. cviii (1978) 86-8.

21 b bhrut I have emended MS brat to read dat. sg. brut (brot is also permitted, IGT ii. 75) as this is obviously a case of 'ciall chomhnaidhe' (cf. IGT i. 73, BST 194.2-4) and, incidentally, gives 'amus' with Dursan; cf. Poem IX. 39a.

d Lenition of fear is necessary for alliteration. Such lenition is grammatically optional, cf. IGT i. 81.

For fhaca: fhaca see Breacadh 14 and for teagh: fhear: theagh: eisean see ibid. 18.

22 b I have shown lenition on thoighe here on the authority of BST 216.8, 14; cf. also Magauran II. 43b, POR XII. 1c, Butlers VI. 29a, VIII. 42a and Poem XII. 41c.

tigh I accept P's reading here as it is one of the correct forms of the dat. sg. of teach/ teagh, IGT ii. 31.

For sin: tigh: Leithbhir see Breacadh 24(c), 26.

c The rime thoighe: toighe: Úghoine is an example of 'breacadh fíre' and negates the 'caoiche'

in geall: geall; see Breacadh 24(c), 26, 57, 59.

23 b do thuit The reading of N and P is used here as it makes better sense than that of A.

24 c flaith luain The example of this phrase in Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh is translated as 'destroying chief' (cit. DIL L, 224.73-4). In Mac C M X. 12b the editor regards luan in a fhir Luain as a personal name. In Marcher lords II. 69b craobh luain is translated 'luminous lord' (cf. 'splendid' DIL L, 223.65). The example in Poem VIII.30b suggests that luan might be taken as a proper noun but that in q. 16c of the same poem appears to be vaguer.

My translation 'heroic prince' is purely conjectural based on a possible extended meaning from luan láith; cf. 'luan .i. laoch' cited from O Clery's Glossary in DIL L, 224.54.

This line is hypermetrical in A and N. It could be rectified by reading ''s' for 'is' but I accept P's reading as it requires no emendation. Historically aonar was used as a dative of apposition accompanied by a possessive pronoun (Thurn. Gramm. 251.2, 388) but from the late tenth century at least we have cases where the pronoun is absent and this usage is well attested in Classical Verse; cf. qq. 26d, 27d infra, Di. D 60.20d, O Hara XXXII. 9a, Magauran XXIII. 36b; see also Celtica vi (1963) 258.

25 a Literally 'no rule is without interruption'.

b Alliteration requires that we read féin

here. The attempt to accommodate the reading of A and N makes the resulting translation somewhat tortuous. Perhaps we should therefore read féin as the emphasising pronoun (cf. P's reading) and emend to dó féin though the meaning would be even more uncertain.

26 d It is difficult to say whether Conn or his house is intended here and this, I feel, is deliberate.

27 Qq. 27-34 have been edited by Knott in ISP, 37-8. I discuss this apologue in Appendix IV.

c Literally (as in ISP, 92) 'the world is only by turns'; cf. 'Ní bhí an saoghal acht fa seach/ baoghal don chlí ris nach crioth/ téid mar théid sruthán i sruth/ uchán uch do bhréig an bioth' Dán Dé XXVI. 18.

d As a aonar and go huaigneach express the same idea I have translated the latter as an intensifier.

For the 'breacadh' in bhí: bhí: airdrí see q. 22c n.

28 a Rimes such as mhuir: mhuir: chuir/ chomhthaibh are dealt with in Breacadh 14, 18.

b Literally 'despite that he placed under peace-conditions'.

d For fóiridh in this sense see DIL F, 256.74-85.

29 a ar an mbiath Translation is tentative and rather awkward.

c gach n-aon Knott, op. cit., 92, explains the eclipsis here as being due to the acc. following mar. It might equally be an example of the tendency for eclipsis to occasionally follow gach; cf. Poem II. 14a n.

d While clearly bearing the metaphorical sense of 'hero', craobh has an added symbolic import here in the context of the body returning to the earth from whence it sprang. There seems to be an added ironic note here, emphasised by the use of cumhraidhe.

For diaidh: gcridh: chridh see q. 12d n.

31 a Gé tá and gé atá (cf. q. 37c infra) are found with seemingly equal frequency in the poetry of the period; e.g. gé atá: DMU I. 38c, Di. D 3.32a; gé tá: Di. D 10.2a, 20.17c.

c adhradh, 'adoration' etc., has an extended meaning 'adhering to, following'; cf. DIL A, 66.17-39.

33 c Literally 'heavily did her elbow lie on him'; see DIL U, 64.62-5.

35 c Bearnais (nom. Bearnas) The pass of Barnesmore, co. Donegal; Onom., 112-3.

36 c cáir is necessary here for perfect rime.

d láimh re The use of dat./ acc. sg. of láimh in this phrase is well-attested in Classical verse (e.g. DMU IV. 30d, 32d, Magauran XIX. 1c, O Hara XXXII. 19b) and elsewhere (cf. DIL L, 38.32-67); we also find nom. sg. láimh re: Poem VIII. 15d, Aith. D 31.39c, DMU VIII. 27d. (Cf. also láimh do láimh in 'réim chanamhna', Breacadh 44-8.)

reacfa me ... a n-ionnshamhail: this he does in qq. 37-40.

37 d diomuidh For the length of the first syllable see Poem VIII.34d.

38 b Éibhir Éibhear (Fionn cf. Poem X.45a) son of Míl. Thus inis, iath etc. Éibhir as a name for Ireland.

c dtroighe (MSS ttroighthe) These are variant forms of the nom. pl. of troigh (IGT ii. 191), the emended form being necessary for rime here.

39 a Id is the proper form before consonants, MS it before vowels; IGT i. 20.

dhreagain N's reading is the most correct of the three manuscripts, though nom. sg. for voc. sg. in o-stems is well-attested, see Ériu ix (1921-3) 88-90, 92-4; cf. q. 50cd infra. That the medial consonant is plosive is proven by riming examples, e.g. Poem VIII. 41cd, IBP 8.9cd, etc. Other words for 'dragon' in the poetry are dragún TD 1.20d, 21b, Aith. D 91.6d and draig TD 13.32b, Butlers XV.2c.

Dor see poem II. 29a n.

40 d On the 'breacadh' in so: so: bhronnta see q. 22c n. supra; on that in ór: ór: brón see q. 12d n.

Note the nominative after ag so. This is in accordance with IGT i. 128 where it is stated that either nom. or acc. may follow ag sin, ag súd, ag so etc.

41 c gá dtám etc. may alliterate either on d- or t-; cf. Éigse xxi (1986) 65.21a n. and Poem IX. 22a.

d This use of uile is noted in DIL U, 61.29-51; for uile: uile: cruinne see q. 12d n.

43 a Easa Ruaidh On the river Erne, near Ballyshannon, on the southern border of Tír Chonaill, Assaroe was famed for its waterfalls and for a Cistercian monastery founded there in 1178. The falls no longer survive but the remains of the abbey may still be seen (Arch. Surv., 327-8).

b Fhódla Lenition of the direct object (IGT i. 81) is required for alliteration.

c The idea being expressed here is that the pledges taken during Conn's lifetime will now have to be returned as his people have lost their supremacy through his death.

44 d Cormac mac Airt was one of the most renowned of the legendary kings of Ireland; for the cycle of tales associated with him see Dillon, The

cycles of the kings, 15-29 and Ó Cathasaigh, The heroic biography of Cormac mac Airt passim. Hence clár Cormaic is a name for Ireland: cf. TD 2.21d, POR XI. 50b.

46 a leath: leath: Oileach is an example of 'réim chanamhna', see Breacadh 44-8.

b Eamhain Mhacha, two miles west of Armagh, traditional seat of the kings of Ulster; see Wailes, CMCS iii (Summer, 1982) 8-10.

Oileach or Aileach, seat of a branch of the Uí Néill, situated on the summit of Greenan Mountain, five miles north-west of Derry; cf. RSAL Jn. xlv (1915) 204-7; Arch. Surv., 111-2.

d Tailltean, nom. Tailte, modern Teltown, bar. Upper Kells, co. Meath; site of the principal oénach of the Uí Néill dynasties, cf. D. A. Binchy, 'The fair of Tailtiu and the feast of Tara' in Ériu xviii (1958) 113-38. Though historically spelt with one -l-, the -ll- is frequently found in Classical Verse; e.g. DMU V. 15d, TD 30.4d, Mac C M I. 4a.

47 a a chnú chridhe i.e. 'o love of my heart', a common expression, especially in Classical religious verse; e.g. MD 70.3c, Aith. D 43.7c, 87.8c, Di. D 12.15c.

b Muaidh The river Moy, co. Mayo, which enters Killala Bay at Ballina.

sruth Sligighe The Sligo river which flows for a short distance between Loch Gill and Sligo Bay.

c Buíll, also Baoill, the river Boyle in co. Roscommon which flows between Loch Gara and Loch Key.

Bearnas (cf. q. 35c supra). The context suggests that this is the name of a river here but, if so, I have been unable to locate it.

48 a For fíodh: aithbhear: aithbhior see Breacadh 24(d), 27(i)-(iv).

folt is dat. sg. of falt (IGT ii.68) and I have therefore shown lenition on the adjective following it.

49 a This idiom is noted in DIL T, 132.17-21.

b dod (MSS dot) see q. 39a n. supra.

On the mutations which follow nocha see IGT i. 19, BST 15b.31-9, 216.3-4.

51 c ar fhiadh n-Uladh Cf. q. 10d supra where there is no eclipsis. The distinction seems to be the 'ciall shiobhuil' in the phrase do-chuaidh ar and the 'ciall chomhnaidhe' in luighidh ar (q. 10); see General Introduction: Editorial Principles.

52 The caithréim, or battle-roll, which begins here, has a long history in Irish tradition (cf. RC xxix (1908) 210-14) and there are numerous examples of it in the poetry of the Early Modern period (e.g. Butlers XV. 6-46; LCAB XXI. lines 121-234; Marcher lords passim; etc.). The use of the theme in the present poem, wherein Conn's death is

seen as revenge for his great victories, is reminiscent of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe's poem on the death of Brian Ó Néill in 1260, Mac C M XIII. 40-50.

Knott (TD i, p. xlvi) and Caerwyn Williams ('The court poet in medieval Ireland', 46) suggest that the vagueness of the references to the exploits in such caithréime was deliberate, as the poets were wary of incurring the displeasure of the defeated individuals or families of whose patronage they might subsequently have need. While there is some evidence to support this (e.g. Watt et. al., Medieval studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn, 193. lines 81-8; LCAB X. lines 81-4) I find it difficult to believe that the mention of places associated with raids or battles, though possibly obscure to us today, would not have been completely intelligible to the audience of the day. A good example of this would be Tadhg mac Dáire's elegy on Donnchadh Ó Briain (+ 1624) which must have been quite provocative at the time; see Celtica xvi (1984) 87-105. Note that in the present caithréim the defeated are mentioned by name on three occasions (qq. 53a, 65b and 74b) and that the poet is conscious that by so doing he may be laying up trouble for himself (q. 75d).

53 a Síol Samhradháin The family of Mág Samhradháin of Teallach n-Eachach (Tullyhaw), co. Cavan; for a brief account of this family see Magauran, pp. viii-x. I have not succeeded in identifying the engagement in question.

b Áth Conoill or Béal Átha Conaill, present-day Ballyconnell, par. Tomregan, bar. Tullyhaw, near the Fermanagh border.

54 b sirthē (siortha NP) Though plural forms of sireadh are found with a non-palatal medial cluster (e.g. Di. D 29.11a, DMU XIII.20b) the forms cited at IGT ii. 49 show only palatal clusters (exx. 1296, 1299); cf. IGT iii. 71, ex. 631.

Srádbhaile (cf. Poem VII. line 9b n.) also Srádbhaile Dúna Dealgan, Dundalk town, co. Louth (cf. Onom., 616). As Srádbhaile refers to the town itself, then Dún Dealgan in d may refer to the Dún itself: 'an ancient tumulus commanding a view of the t[own] ...' Onom., 382. Dundalk marked the northern limit of the Pale and must have been a prime target for many a raid by a northern chief.

55 b Loch It is difficult to say what area is intended. Given the other locations mentioned here, Loch nEathach (Loch Neagh) might be a possibility. In AU iii, 564, the editor takes 'ó Loch soir' to refer to Loch Erne.

c críoch Oirghiall Though historically comprising the modern-day counties Louth, Monaghan, Armagh, Derry and Tyrone, by the sixteenth century, Oirghialla had come to refer specifically to the territory of Mac Mathghamhna in Monaghan; cf. TD ii, 227. For a note on the form and development of the genitive of this word see EIHM, 224 n. 2.

d Coirrshliabh The Curlew mountains in Mac Diarmada's country, just north of the Búill on the border between Sligo and Roscommon. One might expect dat. Coirrshléibh but for similar 'cosg réime' cf. Poem IX. 51c n.

Cúlmuine Although there is another Cúlmhaine in Inishowen (Onom., 321), this location is

probably to be equated with Collooney, par.
 Ballysadare, bar. Tirerrill, some six miles south of
 Sligo town, in the territory of the Mac Donaghs.

56 a Tír Fhiachrach Tireragh, O Dowd's
 country between Killala and Sligo.

b Inis Chua, par. Crossmolina, bar.
 Tirawley, co. Mayo. This was Burke territory and
 adjacent to Tír Fhiachrach; cf. O Donovan, The
genealogies ... of Hy-Fiachrach, 114p, 281u - 2; IBL
 xxvii (1941) 266.

Fánad Given the context this is unlikely to
 be the peninsula in Donegal; cf. Magauran XXVII and
ibid., 429 (3656 n.).

cuairt: cuairt appears to be an example of
 'breacadh fíre' as defined in Breacadh 14-15.

d d'fhíonfhuil N's reading is employed here
 as that of A and P does not make 'comhardadh slán';
fíonfhuil, literally 'wine-blood', is a frequently
 occurring compound in Classical Verse, e.g. DMU I.43d,
Di. D 40.14a.

57 ab I have been unable to identify either
 Bealach Nid or Baile an tSacán. For creach: creach
 see q 56b n.

d Neither the reading of A and N (do rinne)
 nor that of P (do rígne) make perfect rime with sídhe.
 The required form is a permitted variant, IGT iii. 1.

58 b Cois Cloiche unidentified.

c uathaibh may refer specifically to the Tuatha in d but my interpretation of this quatrain is that although Conn returned safely from both Cois Cloiche and the Tuatha, Death avenged them both on him.

d na Tuathaibh i.e. Tuatha Toraighe: cf. Poem II, Introduction.

um for fa here; for the phrase see DIL L, 37.65-80. Note also the 'cosg réime' here due to the prepositional phrase; see IGT i. 82 and Eigse iii (1941-2) 61; cf. 'Beiris an bhean san loing leis' TD 20.28a.

59 b I do not know whether three specific rivers are being alluded to here, or whether na trí h-aibhne is to be construed as a placename.

d Note that P's reading gives an opposite sense to that of A and N.

60 a aithbhi This line is hypermetric in both N and P. For aithbhe (IGT ii. 3) in the sense of 'avenging' see DIL A, 235.55-60 and to the examples cited there add Mac C M III.5d, X.27d and possibly Magauran II.31d.

b deireadh sluaigh Cf. Poem IX.56b n.

c Bhanna The Bann flows north from Loch Neagh and enters the sea at Coleraine, forming a natural boundary between present-day counties Derry and Antrim. In the sixteenth century the area between the bann and the Finn would have comprised mainly Ó

Néill territory.

61 a Beanna Boirche in Íbh Eathach, near the source of the Bann in the Mourne mountains. This was in the territory of Fearghal Óg's patron, Mág Aonghusa: cf. Poem V. 57a.

a bharr Nom. for voc. sg.; see Bergin in Ériu ix (1921-3) 92-4.

b Caorthannán is, according to Onom., 137, the townland of Castlehill, par. Addergoole, bar. Tirawley, co. Mayo. As with Inis Chua in q. 56b, this was in Mac Uilliam territory.

For the 'breacadh fíre' in creach: creach: creach see Breacadh 24(b), 25(ix), (x).

c Or, perhaps, 'alas that you did not desist [from them]'?

62 b An Lagán is most likely the Lagan Valley in the barony of Raphoe (AFM v, 1553 n. t). Another Lagan, in Tirawley, is noted in Onom., 473.

An Iobhar is Newry, co. Down, an important gateway into the north which, in the second half of the sixteenth century, the English, chiefly through the agency of Sir Nicholas Bagenal, did their best to control; see Co. Louth Arch. and Hist. Jn. xxi/1 (1985) 32-3.

c Sliabh Fuaid The highest mountain in the Fews range, co. Armagh.

ar n-uair see DIL U, 34.50-78; all the examples cited there call into question Hogan's affirmation that we should translate this idiom as 'at

once' (A handbook of Irish idioms, 69).

d An Eóghanach is the river Owenagh in Mac Mathghamhna's territory of Monaghan (Onom., 398).

63 a Magh Eine is a plain in north cos Leitrim and Sligo. In July of 1582, Conn leading 1,200 Scots burned Sligo town and 'other towns adjacent'; Cal. SP Ire. 1574-85, 384; Cal. Carew MSS 1575-88, 329. Cf. q. 75b.

b Suilighe, nom. Suileach, either the river Swilly or the sea-lake of the same name into which it flows.

d The incident to which this line may refer is recorded, at some length, by the 'Four Masters'; AFM v, 1550-8. In 1557 Seaán Ó Néill invaded Tír Chonaill. Maghnas Ó Domhnaill was imprisoned by his son, An Calbhach, at the time. Ó Néill made camp at baile Aighidh Chaoine 'a ccomhfhoccus don tsruith shiles as an topar dianidh ainm Cobharthach'. He was surprised by Conn mac An Chalbhaigh who won a notable victory and whose share of the spoils was substantial enough to be enumerated by the annalists. Regarding the precise location of the Cobharthach, O Donovan (loc. cit. note w) states that, despite an extensive search in 1835, he was unable to locate it or find anyone who could recall it.

64 a It is not possible to say what Caisléan Riabhach is intended here. There were two in co. Mayo, and one each in cos Roscommon, Longford, Down and Offaly.

b Cill Eala Killala, co. Mayo. For iarraidh meaning 'attack' see DIL I, 31.50-58.

c Áth Seanaigh Ballyshannon, at the mouth of the Erne where the O Donnell's had a castle which Conn took on his release by Seán Ó Néill in May 1567; Cal. SP Ire. 1509-73, 334.

65 b Cill Challáin unidentified.

66 a It is possible that 'sliocht Airt' may refer to the Maguires here (they were descended from Art Aoinfhear through Colla dá Chrích); cf. POR, 213.1957 n.

b Dartraighe in co. Leitrim. The 'breacadh fíre' here (creach: creach see q. 56b n.) negates the 'caoiche' (barr: barr) in cd; see Breacadh 57, 59.

c This line wants a syllable in both N and P; no is a stressed particle (< d(a)no) and is frequently found in the present construction, e.g. Di. D 58.29d, ISP, 80.14d, DIL D, 92.38-56. The context seems to require an interpretation of nó no slightly different to that suggested by O Rahilly in SGS iii (1929-31) 59 n. 1.

67 c Teach an Teampla was a major O Hara residence in co. Sligo; O Hara, xxx-xxxi.

68 a I have failed to locate Móin na Cille.

c a fhir Bhreagh cf. TD ii, 194.45 n. Fear is common in later genealogies where it has the meaning of 'lord' or 'local lord', cf. Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 180; compare fer lethbali in Mesca Uladh line 195 and 'fear a athardha' in the obituary notice for Aodh Mág Aonghusa which I quote in the Introduction to Poem V. It was also common in this sense in Scottish Gaelic, e.g., cf. 'Fear na Comraich' in Watson, Gaelic songs of Mary Macleod, 14; Fear Foithreach 'the Laird of Foyers', W.J. Watson, History of the Celtic place-names of Scotland, 509. For some examples from Classical Verse see Marcher lords II. 56d, III. 41d, 50c.

69 b An Caol Uisge, 'The Narrow Water' near Carlingford Loch in Íbh Eathach. Aodh Mág Aonghusa had a castle there: Cal. Carew MSS 1589-1600, 140; cf. Poem V. 59c.

d This phrase arises from analogy with 'téid ar'; cf. q. 49a n. supra.

70 ab See q. 15c n. supra.

c Though we cannot say for certain what incident is referred to here, it may be worth noting that, on one occasion in 1564, Conn, accompanied by Toirrdhealbhadh Ó Baoill, attacked Dún na nGall, taking advantage of An Calbhach's absence in Dublin (AFM v, 1598). However, Conn only succeeded in getting himself captured by Aodh mac Maghnasa and Seaán Ó Néill. For a description of the castle of Dún na nGall see Arch. Surv., 361-5.

Perhaps uair oile should be translated as 'a

second time', cf. Poem XI. 46a.

Note the 'breacadh' here: uair: uair: uaidh;
cf. q. 12c n. supra.

71 a Caisléan na Finne (Castlefinn, par. Donaghmore, bar. Raphoe) was situated about five miles down river from Lifford. As in the case of Teach Leithbhir, it was a constant source of contention among the Uí Dhomhnaill and between Ó Domhnaill and Ó Néill. In 1549, in resolution of a complex disagreement, it was taken from Aodh mac Maghnasa and given to his father by the same arrangement which saw Leithbhear officially granted to Conn (Cal. Carew MSS 1515-74, 220). By 1564 Conn was in possession of Caisléan na Finne when, due to pressure from Ó Néill, he was forced to surrender it (Cal. SP Ire. 1509-73, 240). No trace of the castle remains today, Arch. Surv., 382.

d This line maintains a nice ambiguity which has been present in these quatrains since q. 61d: it is impossible for Fearghal Óg to enumerate Conn's victories because they are too numerous but also because to do so reminds the poet of the sorrow and the turmoil occasioned by his death. In a similar way soraidh in line c simultaneously expresses connotations of salutation and valediction.

72 a I do not know what incident is referred to here. It appears a somewhat exaggerated claim and perhaps we should translate 'were associated with you' for which there is some corroboratory evidence (cf. Scots merc., 107 and q. 63a n. supra). However, the context would appear to require the given

interpretation.

73 b I have not succeeded in locating Droichead Caradh.

c Cearmna Originally a placename in co. Meath somewhere in the vicinity of Teamhair; used here as a name for Ireland. See Ó Concheanainn, 'Cermna in Meath' in Ériu xxii (1971) 87-96 where three other examples of this usage from Classical Verse are discussed.

74 b The incident referred to here is unknown to me. The Uí Chatháin were powerful 'urraghs' of Ó Néill. Their territory was bounded by Loch Foyle to the north, the Sperrin mountains to the south and by the rivers Bann and Foyle to the east and west. The chiefs of the period in question would have been Aibhne mac Cumhaigh (d. 1577) and Ruaidhrí mac Maghnasa (d. 1598), but who 'mac Í Chatháin' was is unclear.

75 a an Rúta The Route in north co. Antrim, originally Mac Quillan territory, it was over-run and settled by the Mac Donalds from the Glynnnes and the Isles in the second half of the sixteenth century.

b Machaire Eabha a plain between Benbulbin and the sea, in co. Sligo (Onom., 518). Cf. q. 63a n.

76 b Clann Chonoill may refer to any of the indigenous families of Tír Chonaill: cf. TD 2.11-12.

Cruachán a place near Lifford, according to Miss Knott (TD ii, 209). Cf. Di. D 63.6d and Gleanings, 31.17d where, in the latter example, Conn is referred to as 'Conn Cruacháin'.

d Note the absence of báthadh guthaidhe here between ní ós, a practice permitted by the schools; e.g., cf. Graiméir lines 3452-60.

77 a Aodh is possibly Aodh Dubh mac Aodha Ruaidh, father of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill.

b The battle of Cill Tuathail (Kiltale, par. and bar. Raphoe) took place in early July 1581 when Conn and Toirdhealbhach Luineach combined to defeat Aodh Ó Domhnaill who was outnumbered. Conn's valour on this day is noted by the annalists, AFM v, 1764-8. (For lenition of Cilli here see q. 5c n.)

d Note again the ambiguity here: the line can refer to those defeated by Conn or to the fact that, because of the retribution now being exacted, it would have been better not to have been associated with him.

78 a Absence of eclipsis on uile suggests that it refers to áiríomh; cf. DIL U, 63.31-4.

c For the lenition of moighe here see Poem II. 10b n.

Mál mac Rochraidhe was a legendary king of Ireland and killer of Tuathal Teachtmhar; Corp. Gen., 121, ZCP xx (1936) 162. Thus 'magh Máil' is a name for Ireland: cf. Poems V. 52c, VIII. 48d.

For remarks on the dúnadh here see Introduction.

79 This quatrain, and q. 80 have been printed by Professor Ó Concheanainn in Éigse xv (1973-4) 245.

a In Classical Verse, Mág is a stressed word; cf. BST 228.8-10. Knott (TD ii, 235, 10.5n.) states that 'when part of a surname, both Mac and Mág are treated alike: fully stressed when no christian name precedes; unstressed when coming between christian name and surname ...' (similarly ISP, 111.10c n.). Thus, in the present instance, the alliteration cannot be between éis and Aonghusa. A parallel example is 'Inghean Mhé^g Uidhir fuair blad^h' Magauran XXII. 37a where the editor emends to fhuair. I emend to uair on the authority of IGT iii.22. For similar editorial fuair > uair cf. TD 9.31b, 15.32c.

bhlaidh 'blad^h' has both a fem. (IGT ii. 40) and a masc. (IGT ii. 95) declension; acc. sg. fem. is required by metre. I show lenition on the basis of IGT i. 78-81.

b While it would be possible to read im beathaidh here, I prefer to read i mbeathaidh, a well-attested idiom: DIL B, 90.15-19.

80 c Ó Concheanainn (loc. cit.) prints this line from P. This is one of his more serious errors as the line there is hypermetrical.

There are three types of 'breacadh' in this quatrain: (i) Chuinn: Chuinn, see q. 56b n.; (ii) ibh: sibh: thuirsig^h, see q. 22b n.; (iii) mé: truaighe/

uainne, see Breacadh 28.

81 a absdoil This is an instance of the genitive of apposition for which see Desid., 246.

b clann Ádhaimh i.e. fallen man, cf. Poem IA.1c.

d tal (IGT ii. 96) is required for perfect rime, and is a permitted variant of MSS tol (IGT ii. 95) and toil (IGT ii. 14).

ní chuirfi A jussive use of the future indicative; cf. Di. D 90.10a, Celtica xii (1977) 140.54.

POEM V

SWIFT BROOK
BOND

Introduction

The subject of this poem, and of Poem VI, is Aodh mac Domhnaill Óig Mhéig Aonghusa, lord of Íbh Eathach, in present day county Down. As he appears to have been Fearghal Óg's main patron he is worthy of special mention.

In October 1542 the chief of Clann Mhéig Aonghusa received his knighthood from Henry VIII at Greenwich, on the same occasion that Conn Bacach Ó Néill was created Earl of Tyrone and his son, Feardorcha, Baron of Dungannon¹. Though the sources do not specify who was Mág Aonghusa at the time, it was undoubtedly Aodh's father, Domhnall Óg². Domhnall Óg probably succeeded Muircheartach who was slain in 1539 as a result of a conspiracy between members of his family and the MacMahons³. The relationship of Domhnall Óg to Muircheartach is not known but Muircheartach's two predecessors, Éamonn Buidhe⁴ and Féilim an Einigh⁵ were brothers of Domhnall Óg's father, Domhnall (Mór)⁶ mac Aodha meic Airt.

Domhnall Óg appears to have died or been

1 Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 65; RSAI Jn. lxii (1932) 29-30.

2 RSAI Jn. lxii (1932) 96-7; Cokayne, The complete peerage viii, 349. The 'Arthur Gynner [sic]', mentioned as being present on this occasion, was either the Bishop of Dromore or the Arthur son of Phelim who was in opposition to Domhnall Óg in 1541 before Domhnall Óg was elected Mág Aonghusa in that year, Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-1574, 290; cf. Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Henry VIII - Eliz., 105, Co. Louth Arch. & Hist. Jn. xxi/1 (1985) 32, NHI ix, 348, Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 361 and Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-1574, 175-6.

3 AFM v, 1452-4 (1539); ALC ii, 318; AC, 712.

4 Died 1527, AU iii, 568.

5 Died 1521, AU iii, 534-6; ALC ii, 234; AC, 640.

6 Died 1520, AFM v, 1346; ALC ii, 232; AC, 638; AU iii, 534-6 (1521), mentioning 'Mág Aonghusa aile, idón, Feidhlimidh' who also died in this year.

deposed sometime prior to 1553 and to have been succeeded by Eugene Magennesse - whose place in the family genealogy is unclear - who agreed with the Lord Deputy, St. Leger to permit Aodh and Domhnall Óg's wife to retain their lands.⁷ Aodh became chief of his family sometime in the early 1570's; in December, 1573 he wrote to the Earl of Essex offering his services to the Queen and desiring, as a matter of urgency, to hold his lands⁸ on grant from her.⁹

In 1576 Sir Henry Sidney informed the Privy Council that '[Mág Aonghusa] has continued a dutiful subject since the overthrow of Shane O'Neale'.¹⁰ In those days, before he became Sir Hugh, Aodh was known to the English only as Ferdor(ou)gh¹¹ and was complained of for his exploits with Seaán Ó Néill in the Carlingford area.¹² Aodh's nickname¹³ (An) Fear Dorcha is well known to us from native sources¹⁴ and the name occurs twice in the present poem, qq. 19a, 32a.

The death of Seaán Ó Néill marks the end of Aodh Mág Aonghusa's voluntary alliance with the Ó Néills. For the rest of his career - that is, for the entire period of his chieftaincy - he appears to have

7 Cal. Carew MSS., 1515-1574, 247. A Donnell Oge Magennis was active in 1571 but his identity is uncertain; Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 443.

8 For a note on Mág Aonghusa's chief seat, Rathfriland, and other strongholds see O'Laverty, An historical account of the diocese of Down and Connor iii, 37. Mág Aonghusa's lands are comprehensively detailed in Cal. Fiants Ire. Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 15), 26-8:4327. For Magennis lands in the seventeenth century see Hill, The Montgomery manuscripts: (1603-1706) i, 306-7.

9 Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 532.

10 Cal. Carew MSS., 1575-1588, 43. Mág Aonghusa himself had written to the Queen in 1575 reminding her of this fact, Cal. SP Ire., 1574-85, 82.

11 E.g. cf. the first reference at note 7.

12 Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 232, 249.

13 Cf. Celtica xviii (1986) 168.

14 E.g. ALC ii, 462; Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 138:1829; LCAB, p. 1; IBP 28. 18c, 22a; Poem VI. 15c.

been one of the northern chiefs most genuinely loyal to the English crown. While all the native rulers were, at one time or another, and to suit their own needs, quite willing to profess their loyalty to Dublin/London, most of the surviving evidence suggests that in Mág Aonghusa's case this profession was accompanied by a large degree of sincerity. The writer of 'The Description and present state of Ulster in 1586' had this to say about him:

Evagh is governed by Sir Hugh Mac Enys, the civilest of all the Irishry in those parts. He was brought by Sir N. B. [sc. Sir Nicholas Bagenal] from the bonaghe of the O Neyles to contribute to the Queen. In this place only amongst the Irish of Ulster is the rude custom of tanistship put away ... Every festival day he wears English garments.¹⁵

In July 1586 he was described as '... the best reconciled subject, the bountifullest and orderlyest housekeeper in the North'.¹⁶ Sir Henry Bagenal, however, maintained that Aodh, among others, only aligned himself with whichever side he perceived to be strongest¹⁷ but this claim is not sustained by the evidence.

Traditionally, Ó Néill of Tír Eoghain claimed suzerainty over Mág Aonghusa. This is

15 Cal. Carew MSS., 1575-1588, 436-7; cf. The antient and present state of the county of Down, 79. Aodh's father, Domhnall Óg, had, in his time, agreed with Henry VIII to induce his followers 'to leave off their wild and savage rites and manner of living', Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 119.

16 Cal. SP Ire., 1586-1588, 98; the statement is, however, from a solicitor acting on Mág Aonghusa's behalf.

17 Bagwell, Ireland under the Tudors iii, 239.

expressed in the sixteenth (?) century document 'Ceart Uí Néill',¹⁸ and Aodh Mág Aonghusa's chieftaincy is dominated by constant resistance to this claim. In this he was following the pattern established by his ancestors.¹⁹

Seaán Ó Néill's successor, Toirdhealbhach Luineach, was anxious to maintain and enforce his claim to the overlordship of his 'urraghs' and the English were equally concerned that he should enjoy no such rule. On the occasion of his submission in 1567, they were careful to exempt Mág Aonghusa, Mac Mathghamhna, Mág Uidhir et al. from Ó Néill's control.²⁰ Notwithstanding this, on many subsequent occasions Toirdhealbhach Luineach was to complain that Mág Aonghusa and others were subject to him and that he was determined they should remain so.²¹

An interesting light on Ó Néill's - and presumably the Irish - view of Aodh is to be found in the reported conversation between Toirdhealbhach and the man who was to succeed him, Aodh Ó Néill, then Baron of Dungannon, while drinking on board Ó Néill's ship in Belfast Lough, September 1579:

Hugh McGuenys, saith hee [sc. Ó Néill] was more than halfe English, but nowe he is thy man, Baron, and myne: No my Lord, sayd the Baron, I am your man and so is he to²²

The accuracy of the statement that Mág Aonghusa was 'more than halfe English' cannot be questioned, but Ó Néill was somewhat wide of the mark if he believed Aodh to be his man. For, though under constant

18 LCAB, pp. 42, 44; *Studia Celtica* i (1966) 6, 8.

19 See K. Simms in *Celtica* xv (1983) 146.

20 Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 346.

21 E.g. *ibid.*, 353, 445; Cal. SP Ire., 1574-1585, 181.

22 *Walsingham*, 189.

pressure,²³ he was consistently opposed to Toirdhealbhach Luineach, an opposition co-ordinated, whenever possible, with English assistance.²⁴ The price of such opposition was high, and Mág Aonghusa was often the object of creacha of varying intensity²⁵ and, on a number of occasions, was forced to submit to Ó Néill.²⁶ It is clear, from the evidence, that such submissions were temporary, if necessary, expedients. In 1585-6 he sat in Perrot's parliament with Sir Nicholas Bagenal as a member for co. Down²⁷ though he may have earned the disapprobation of the English for voting against the repeal of Poyning's Law.²⁸ In April 1593 we find him passing information to Sir Henry Bagenal concerning the imminent united rebellion of the Ulster chiefs.²⁹

Aodh married the daughter of Aodh Conallach Ó Raghallaigh (d. 1583), whose name it appears was Annabel,³⁰ the mother of his three sons and two daughters.³¹ Despite his opposition to the Uí Néill Tíre Eoghain, Aodh's family was doubly linked with them, matrimonially, though not with Toirdhealbhach Luineach's branch (descended from Art Óg Ó Néill) but with that of his successor Aodh (descended from Conn Bacach Ó Néill). Mág Aonghusa's eldest son, Art

23 See Cal. SP Ire., 1509-1573, 418, 505 for reports of Mág Aonghusa's dire predicament.

24 E.g. Cal. SP Ire., 1574-1585, 204, 246.

25 Cal. SP Ire., 1586-1588, 98; Cal. Carew MSS, 1589-1600, 116; Br. Mus. Catg. i, 395 n. 1. Cf. Poem IV.61a n., 69b n.

26 Cal. SP Ire., 1574-1585, 248; Cal. Carew MSS, 1575-1588, 439; Cal. Carew MSS, 1589-1600, 98; Gillespie, Colonial Ulster, 44.

27 Bagwell, op. cit., 141.

28 Cal. SP Ire., 1574-1585, 570; English historical review xxi (1914) 108-9.

29 Cal. SP Ire., 1592-1596, 95.

30 Lambeth Palace Library MS 635, f. 15v; AFM v, 1806 n. c; NL Ire. MS 3259, p. [5].

31 Cal. Fiants Ire., Eliz. (PRI rep. DK 16), 27; Lambeth Palace Library MS 635, f. 15v.

(+1629) married Sorchá daughter of Aodh³² while Aodh Ó Néill himself took Caitir Fhíona, daughter of Mág Aonghusa, as his fourth, and last, wife.³³

Aodh Mág Aonghusa died on 12 January, 1596.³⁴ The 'Four Masters' record his obit but go somewhat astray in his patronymic³⁵:

Mág Aonghusa Aodh mac Aodha meic Domhnaill
Óicc fear a athardha ro badh mó ainm 7
erdearcus i ffiadhnaisi Gall 7 Gaoidhél
Ereann décc go feachtnach.³⁶

After a short-lived struggle with Glaisne Mág Aonghusa, leader of the junior Clanconnell branch of the family³⁷, Aodh's son, Art, succeeded to the chieftaincy³⁸, which he held until his death in 1629.

We are familiar with Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's attachment to Mág Aonghusa primarily through the honorific quatrains which he addresses to him in some of his compositions.³⁹ Of the sixty poems which, I believe, may definitely be ascribed to Fearghal Óg, fourteen contain these supplementary quatrains. If we exclude the three addressed to or concerning Mág Aonghusa, this means almost one quarter of the poet's extant compositions. Of these only four⁴⁰ were composed during the patron's lifetime, the earliest of which may be that in the poem beginning 'Beannacht

32 Walsh, The will and family of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, 38-9.

33 Ibid., 20; see Poem XII. 54-8. Aodh's other daughter whose name is unknown to me, married Sir Seaán mac Briain mhic Féilím Í Néill of Lower Clondeboy; Lambeth Palace MS 635, f. 15v.

34 Cal. Carew MSS. 1589-1600, 136.

35 A fact noted by Ó Grady, Br. Mus. Catg. i, 395 n. 1.

36 AFM vi, 1984 (1595).

37 UJA 2nd Ser. i (1894-5) 31.

38 Cal. Carew MSS. 1589-1600, 138, 181; Cal. SP Ire. 1592-1596, 457.

39 Discussed by T. Ó Concheanainn in Éigse xv (1973-4) 235-51.

40 IBP 5.24, O Hara XI.12, Di. D 109.24, Celtica xvi (1984) 81.36.

siar uaim go h-Éirinn' (see chapter (v) above). In two such quatrains⁴¹ Fearghal Óg states that the practice was a result of a formal agreement with Aodh. This arrangement of a 'rann ar gach dán' is most familiar to us from that of Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa with Aodh mac Con Chonnacht Mhéig Uidhir as chronicled in 'Connradh do cheanglas re hAodh'⁴² and fulfilled in many of his poems,⁴³ and from Thomas O'Sullevane's account in his 'Dissertation'.⁴⁴

A collection of nine poems to members of Clann Mhéig Aonghusa is found in the Book of the O Conor Don, ff. 264r - 276v.⁴⁵ Seven of these also occur in Franciscan Library MS A 25 and six are exclusive to these two manuscripts.⁴⁶ Paul Walsh suggested that A 25 dated from the second decade of the seventeenth century and that it was in Flanders some time after 1613.⁴⁷ The history of these two manuscripts and the similarities in the texts of the Mág Aonghusa poems suggest that they may have shared a common exemplar for this material at least.⁴⁸

41 Last ref. in n. 40; Poem XII.59.

42 Book of the O Conor Don, f. 218v.

43 E.g. RIA MS 23 L 17, ff. 85r, 86r.

44 Memoirs of the Right Honourable The Marquis of Clanricarde, clxvii.

45 The poems are: f. 264, 'Lubhghort fíneamhna fuil Ír'*; f. 267r, 'Mairg do chuaidh re ceird ndúthchais'; f. 268r, 'Lámh dhearg Éirionn Aoibh Eathach'; f. 269r.20, 'Iomdha agra ar Íbh Eathach'; f. 270v.14, 'Nír ionchuir meisi mé fein'; f. 271v.5, 'Foraire Uladh ar Aodh'; f. 272v. 15, 'Mé féin m'énbhráidhisi ar Aodh'; f. 273v.5, 'Foraois na horchra Íbh Eathach'; f. 275r.10, 'Creach Gaoidheal éag éanduine'. (Those marked * not found in A 25.) The arrangement of poems according to families in the Book of the O Conor Don has been noted by Professor Ó Cuív, The Irish Bardic Duanaire or 'Poem-Book', 10.

46 The exception is 'Lámh dhearg' of which many copies survive.

47 IMN (1928) 27. It also has connections with (South-)East Ulster (cf. marginalia listed Franc. Catg., 51) and, in this context, can it be entirely fortuitous that the only copy of Ó Gnín's 'Cuimseach sin a Fhearghail Óig' is found in this manuscript (pp. 131-2)?

48 See further, Introduction (Editorial remarks) to Poem VI.

Five of these poems concern Aodh Mág Aonghusa and only one of these, the present poem, (not in A 25), is ascribed to Fearghal Óg. However, I believe that certainly one other, and possibly two, may be ascribed to our poet also. The first is that beginning 'Mé féin m'éanbhráighisi ar Aodh' (Poem VI q.v.), the second begins 'Níor iomchuir meisi mé féin'.⁴⁹ This latter poem, anonymous in both manuscripts, recalls the poet's relationship with Mág Aonghusa, alluding, in some detail, to the honours he received and regretting that he did not show proper gratitude for these while Aodh was alive.

From the language of the poem, it is clear that the poet occupied the position of 'chief's poet' to Mág Aonghusa -cf. 'Do bhínn aige um fhírfhear gráidh' q. 9a and 'fuaras uadh onóir ollaimh' q. 15c - but that the 'cumann',⁵⁰ which he contracted with his patron was not wholly reciprocated on the poet's part. If we compare this poem with Fearghal Óg's brief lament for Aodh, that beginning 'Mairg atá an uairsi gan Aodh',⁵¹ we can see that the relationship described there is identical to that detailed in 'Níor iomchuir meisi'. Thus, in 'Mairg atá' Fearghal Óg laments the gifts he received:

Uch, nach obadh uaras uaidh!
dursan mar fhuaras tre aoibh
sgoth a bhleidheadh 's a bhrat sróill
slat nár thóir ar neimheadh naoimh.

49 Ed. P. Walsh in IMN (1931) 41-3; C. Ó Lochlainn in *Éigse* ii (1940) 157-62, (references to this edition). The other two poems are elegies on Aodh Mág Aonghusa, the one a caithréim ('Iomdha agra ar Íbh Eathach'), the other a rather tedious effort in 'casbhairdne' and incomplete ('Creach Gaoidheal éag eandúine').

50 For the code involved here see Poem III and cf. Poem VI.16.

51 Ní Dhomhnaill, Duanaireacht, 108-10.

Uchán och, a n-aghbháil uadh
sgoth a raghráidh is a rún,
dob fhearr mo chor uadha um fhíon
guala mo ríogh do dhol dúnn.

Mairg dhúinn ar ar dáiliodh iad,
mairg dar dáiliodh dlús a phóg
tús a thoirbheirt, togha a séad
is rogha a stéad n-oirdheirc n-óg. (qq. 9-11)

With this we may compare, for instance, qq. 12-13 of
'Níor iomchuir meisi':

Tús suighe, leath a leaptha,
fuaras fós, fáth aigeanta,
tús a óil, rún í Rosa
do chóidh fún a bfuarasa.

Fuaras fpóig fuaras fháilte
fuaras óm fhior énpháirti
teas gráidh in dondabhraigh dhuinn
tar ollamhnaibh chláir Chriomhthuinn.

As we know for certain that Fearghal Óg occupied the position of 'chief's poet' to Aodh Mág Aonghusa and lacking evidence of any other incumbent, I am strongly inclined to attribute 'Níor iomchuir meisi mé fein' to our poet also. The references in that poem to the poet's neglect of his patron are, to a slight extent, supported by the evidence of Poem VI in which the poet, as it were, re-introduces himself to Mág Aonghusa after a period of absence (see also chapter (iv) above).

If indeed 'Níor iomchuir meisi' is ascribable to Fearghal Óg the final quatrain of that poem is very important:

Art mac Aodha an abhra mhoill,
do dhéna mac mhic Domhnaill,
gnúis iodhan na ttachar tte,
ionadh a athar oirne.

Here the poet asks (for the jussive future cf. Poem IV. 81d n.) Aodh's son and successor, Art, to continue the patronage which the poet enjoyed from his father. Because there is no evidence that Fearghal Óg ever enjoyed such a relationship with Art mac Aodha, and because, in the years before and after the death of Aodh Mág Aonghusa, we find Fearghal Óg seeking patronage elsewhere (see General Introduction) we may conclude that the poet's request was not granted. Indeed what evidence there is suggests that it may have been a kinsman of our poet, Gofraidh mac Briain, who was in favour with Art Mág Aonghusa in the early seventeenth century. An honorific quatrain to Mág Aonghusa and to Mac Diarmada occurs in a poem addressed to Tadhg mac Taidhg (+ 1607) Í Bhaoighill⁵² and also in the anonymous poem beginning 'Álainn claochlódh na Cairrge'⁵³, addressed to Brian mac Briain Mheic Dhiarmada who succeeded Conchubhar mac Taidhg of Poem VIII. This patronage of Gofraidh Mac an Bhaird may have been the result of an impassioned plea by the same poet in a poem beginning 'Meisi ar th'fhaosamh a Airt Ruaidh'⁵⁴ and he may also have been the author of a straightforward panegyric to Art beginning 'Írial coghnach chloinne Ír'.⁵⁵

52 Di. D 78.22.

53 Maynooth MS B 8, pp. 87-9.

54 RIA MS A iv 3, pp. 775-7. Fear Flatha Ó Gnínmh also sought Art's patronage, IBP 28. The family of Mág Aonghusa were remembered by Séamus Dall Mac Cuarta for their patronage of poets; see Ó Gallchoir, Séamas Dall, 67.155-7.

55 Ascribed to Gofraidh Óg Mac an Bhaird in Br. Lib. MS Eg. 112, f. 479r.-v., and to Gofraidh mac Briain in Stoneyhurst MS A ii 20, pt. II, pp. 94-6.

It is in the context of this possible rejection that I would view the despairing tone of 'Mairg atá an uairsi gan Aodh' - for example cf. q. 3:

Dá n-imghiodh duine re dán
fa chiniodh don chuire ríogh,
do bhiadh croch roimhe ar gach raon;
och, gan Aodh Doire dhar ndíon.

The present poem, I feel, is more than just an ordinary panegyric. It represents an attempt by Fearghal Óg to present his patron with a celebration of the fact that he, Mág Aonghusa, was, in his day, the most prominent of the heirs to a very illustrious ancestry. He was descended, through Conall Cearnach, from Rudhraighe mac Sitridhe who in turn was descended, through Ollamh Fódla, from Íor mac Míleadh.⁵⁶ This line is referred to, throughout the poem, as Síol (etc.) Ír or Síol (etc.) Rudhraighe, though to the genealogists they were also known as Dál nAraidhe and were accorded the title of 'fírlaigh Emna' to distinguish them from the Dál bhFiatach.⁵⁷ From Rudhraighe - who was said to have ruled Ireland for seventy years⁵⁸ - were descended all the protagonists, on the Ulaid side, of the series of tales referred to as the Ulster Cycle at the centre of

56 For this and what follows, I have consulted the relevant sections of Ó Cléirigh's genealogies (*Anal. Hib.* xviii (1951) 136-47) and those of Mac Fhir Bhisigh (*UCD Add. Ir. MS* 14, pp. 561-72). The earlier traditions and genealogies, printed from *Rawl. B 502* (variants from *LL*, *Laud* 610, *Lecan* and *Ballymote*) in *Corp. Gen.*, 269-86, have also been consulted. Cf., also, *Leb. Gab.* v, 288-94.

57 *Corp. Gen.*, 120 (136 a 7-9), 154 (143 a 15 ff.), 275 (156 b 45); *Leb. Gab.* v, 290, 292; cf. *EIHM*, 180 n.3.

58 *Corp. Gen.*, 120 (as n. 57); *Leb. Gab.* v, 290, 292.

which is Táin Bó Cuailnge.⁵⁹ In the late sixteenth century Síol Rudhraighe was represented by a series of families, all of them of minor political significance, including Ó Lochloinn Bhoirne, Ó Mordha, Ó Fearghail, Mág Raghnaill and Ó Conchubhair Chiarraighe.⁶⁰ Of these, the family of Mág Aonghusa was pre-eminent.⁶¹

All this, no doubt, would have been a matter of some pride for Mág Aonghusa and it would have been only natural for his poet, Fearghal Óg, to treat^{of} this subject when addressing a poem to him. The matter, however, was not as simple as that^{as} there was already in existence a poem, addressed to Aodh's great-great-grandfather Art mac Aodha meic Airt, which set out, in detail, the achievements of Clann Rudhraighe and, on that basis, argued for the supremacy in Ulster of their principal descendants, Clann Mhéig Aonghusa. This was the poem beginning 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach'.⁶² While that poem seems to have been occasioned by a desire to expose, by implication, the fallacy of the Í Néill claims to be heirs to Eamhain Mhacha,⁶³ it enjoyed a considerable reputation as a panegyric in its own right⁶⁴ and established a precedent in treating of Clann Rudhraighe which was too strong for the chief

59 For the immediate descendants of Rudhraighe see Corp. Gen. 271-2 (156 a 55 - b 6) and the E Mod. Irish poem beginning 'Féachaidh cairdeas Cloinne Róigh' (copy consulted: RIA MS E iv 3, pp. 54-7).

60 References as at n. 56.

61 Cf. Ó Raithbheartaigh, Genealogical tracts, 29.

62 Copies consulted: Franciscan Lib. MS A 25, pp. 183-5; Book of the O Conor Don, ff. 268r-269r; RIA MS 23 F 16, pp. 210-11.

63 See Simms, 'Propaganda use of the Táin in the later middle ages' in Celtica xv (1983) 142-9.

64 Some twenty copies survive in manuscripts and the poem played an important part in the well-known controversy between Diarmuid Mac an Bhaird, Eoghan Ó Donnghaile and Niall Mac Muireadhaigh in the second half of the seventeenth century, e.g. cf. TD i, pp. xvii-xviii.

poet to Aodh Mág Aonghusa to ignore.

The influence of 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach' is discernable in two of Fearghal Óg's compositions and it is both of interest and of relevance to briefly compare the two in the context of the earlier poem. One of the families mentioned above as belonging to Síol Rudhraighe is that of Ó Fearghail. Fearghal Óg addressed a poem to two sons of Ó Fearghail - Írial and Rudhraighe - beginning 'Ar sliocht trír atáid Gaoidhil' which has been dated by its editor to pre-1592.⁶⁵ Qq. 1-10 establish the descent of Clann Rudhraighe from Íor mac Míleadh; qq. 11-21 treat of the martial exploits of Clann Rudhraighe; qq. 22-35 claim that Clann Rudhraighe have their 'sáith d'oidhreadhaibh' in the two sons of Ó Fearghail and extol the two mainly for their physical perfection; the final three quatrains concern Aodh Mág Aonghusa, Conn Ó Ruairc and St. Peter respectively. It is, therefore, an unremarkable poem to an unremarkable pair. Unremarkable that is except in one detail. This concerns the second section, qq. 11-21. Here, the list of victories of Clann Rudhraighe closely parallels that in qq. 1-15 of 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach' with a number of verbal correspondences.⁶⁶ More importantly the main argument of the first half of 'Lámh dhearg' is that all these victories were achieved by Clann Rudhraighe without ever having to pay compensation for them, in other words their supremacy was total:

65 Ó Concheanainn, 'Dán molta ó Fhearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird' in *Celtica* xvi (1984) 73-85.

66 E.g. cf. 'Deargruathar Chonaill na gcreach / Baoithréim Uladh-iúl díreach' (Ar sliocht q. 16 ab): 'deargruathar Conaill Chearnaigh ... Baoithréim Uladh don taoibh thiar' (Lámh dhearg qq. 5b, 6a); 'Fraoch mac Fiodhaigh is Fear Diadh' (Ar sliocht q. 19a): 'Fraoch mac Fiodhaigh is Fer Diadh' (Lámh dhearg q. 12a).

Do chleachtadar riamh roimhe
 curaidh Chloinne Rudhroighe
 éachta troma ó mhuir go muir
 's gan éarca orra d'iarraidh. (q. 3)

This is exactly the point which Fearghal Óg makes in qq. 17-19 of 'Ar sliocht trír'; e.g.

níor léire a n-éarca uile,
 éachta fhréimhe Rudhraighe. (q. 17cd)

The structure of the poem edited here is as follows. It begins (qq. 1-6) with praise of the line of Íor among whom Clann Rudhraighe are supreme (qq. 7-13). They are pre-eminent in two respects: in the matter of generosity (qq. 14-18) - which Mág Aonghusa himself epitomises (q. 19) - and in the area of martial prowess (qq. 21-7). As Clann Rudhraighe are supreme among Síol Ír, so Mág Aonghusa is supreme among Clann Rudhraighe (qq. 28-34). He is the protector of poets (q. 35) thus following a precedent established by Clann Rudhraighe on three famous occasions (qq. 36-44) for which reason the Ulaidh, and especially Aodh, receive priority from the poets (qq. 45-6). Now, however, the supremacy of Clann Rudhraighe, which in olden times saw them rule for nine hundred years, is being threatened by lack of unity as is the recognition of Aodh as the prophesied one, Aodh Eanghach (qq. 47-53). It is certain that Aodh is the prophesied one as the fruitfulness of nature proclaims it (qq. 54-60). Aodh is therefore to be likened to any of the seventy-eight kings of Clann Rudhraighe or indeed to any high-king (qq. 61-6). The poem then closes with a direct address to and praise of Mág Aonghusa (qq. 67-75) and with complimentary quatrains to St. Peter and Conn Ó Ruairc (qq. 76-7).

I would contend that, in this poem, Fearghal Óg is attempting a major poem on Clann Rudhraighe to emulate and possibly surpass 'Lámh dhearg Éireann'. In contrast to 'Ar sliocht trír' his debt to 'Lámh dhearg' is more one of general inspiration and development than direct borrowing. Thus we again have the caithréim of Clann Rudhraighe (qq. 21-7) with its concomitant idea of the non-payment of 'éarca' for the victories achieved (q. 22d; cf. q. 8). Here, however, the list of victories is more restrained and, again in contrast to both 'Lámh dhearg' and 'Ar sliocht trír', is not an end in itself but rather is integrated into the poem as just one of its many components.

The influence of 'Lámh dhearg' is also to be detected, perhaps, in the section describing Aodh as the prophesied one and this being attested to by the favourable signs of nature. 'Lámh dhearg' also contains such a passage (qq. 33-6) though in 'Lubhghort fíneamhna' this is subject to much greater elaboration.⁶⁷

But there is more to this poem than simply a development of themes already present in 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach'. It is as if Fearghal Óg set out to treat of every major piece of tradition concerning Clann Rudhraighe while attempting to give each equal prominence within the confines of a single poem. Thus while the list of victories is more restricted than in either 'Lámh dhearg' or 'Ar sliocht trír', the theme of generosity, which is not a significant feature of either of those poems, receives two treatments. The first concerns outstanding instances of individual

67 'Lámh dhearg' is ascribed (by a non-scribal hand) in B to 'Maoleachluinn orrdairc na nuirsgéal' and in another poem ascribed to him, he refers to the same patron, Aodh mac Airt Mhéig Aonghusa, as 'Tairngeartach Teamhrach Midhe' (Di. D 96.35a). Cf. q. 53c n. *infra*.

generosity (qq. 14-18), the second concerns the specific and renowned case of the threefold retention of the poets by Clann Rudhraighe. In 'Ar sliocht trír' this is alluded to in one quatrain (q. 11), in 'Lubhghort fíneamhna' it occupies nine quatrains (qq. 36-44), to my knowledge the most comprehensive treatment of the subject.⁶⁸

Similarly other seanchas of Clann Rudhraighe is dealt with. In q. 49 we are told that they were supreme over Ireland and Ulster for nine hundred years while q. 62 states that there are seventy-eight kings in their 'réim ríoghroidhe'. I have been unable to discover how Fearghal Óg arrived at this number but this is not surprising. While the number of kings of Síol Ír who attained the kingship of Ireland remains fairly constant at around twenty-five⁶⁹ the number who were kings of Ulster varies.⁷⁰ In Poem XII.56-7 Fearghal Óg gives the number of kings of Ireland as fifty with the same number of kings of Ulster. Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha, in his poem beginning 'Ó cheathrar gluaisid Gaoidhil', gives a succinct account of the traditions known to him and also confirms Fearghal Óg's estimate of nine hundred years:

Tarla díobhsain suaithnidh linn
cúig rígh fichiod ós Eirinn
múr Teamhrach fán tslatchoill sean
ó dhá chloinn mheardha Mhíleadh.

⁶⁸ See q. 35d n. infra.

⁶⁹ Corp. Gen., 275 (156 b 45-50); Leb. Gab. 290, 292; 'Trí uaithne um Inis Ghaoidehal' q. 11 (23 F 16, p. 69.21-2; 23 M 18, p. 349.8-9); 'Fán ráith imrid aicme Ír' q. 6 (E iv 3, p. 60.5-6); cf. Anal. Hib. xviii (1951) 138.1828. See Poem VI. 21c.

⁷⁰ Corp. Gen., 276-7; 'Cland Ollamhan uaisle Eamhna' (UCD Add. Ir. MS 14, pp. 589-97; Stud. Hib. iv (1964) 54-94).

Tríocha rígh oile a n-Eamhuin
 don ghasraigh óig fhionnfhleadaigh
 ós chóigeadh na bhfiadhchladh bhfionn
 cúigeadh iathmhagh na h-Éirionn.

Naoi gcéad bliadhain do bhí sin
 tír Uladh na n-óg n-oirdheirc
 tír ionar mhíochuid re meas
 fán dtríochaid rígh do ráidheas. ⁷¹

This poem therefore was an ambitious piece of work by our poet as he attempted to reaffirm the supremacy of Mág Aonghusa among Clann Rudhraighe and to do so on a grand scale. It is tempting to regard 'Ar sliocht trír' as a rehearsal for this as it is also a composition in a similar vein (a point missed by its editor) though much more directly derivative from 'Lámh dhearg'. It is impossible, however, to establish any definite date for 'Lubhghort fíneamhna' and the question must therefore remain open. In any case I would conclude that, once this poem is viewed and understood in its context, there can be little doubt but that Fearghal Óg succeeded in his intention.

Editorial remarks The poem is found in ten manuscripts:

- (i) The Book of the O Conor Don (B), ff. 264r-266v; written by Aodh Ó Dochartaigh, 1631.
- (ii) RIA 23 A 40 (A), pp. 340-52; mainly written

71 Qq. 57-9; E iv 3, p. 53.17-22.

by Seán Mac Solaidh with additions by Tadhg Ó Neachtain, c. 1713, but our poem is in Richard Tipper's hand.

- (iii) NLI G 127 (G), pp. 223-35; written by Richard Tipper, 1713-15.
- (iv) Br. Lib. Eg. 128 (E), ff. 139r-141v; written by Muiris Ó Gormáin, 1748-9.
- (v) TCD 1345.iii (D), pp. 66-82; written by Muiris Ó Gormáin (no date).
- (vi) TCD 1291 (F), ff. 151r-156v; written by Hugh O Daly, 1755.
- (vii) RIA 23 G 5 (H), pp. 53-55; written by Mícheál Ó Cathasaigh, 1797-8.
- (viii) RIA 23 Q 1 (Q), pp. 226-30; written by Edward O Reilly (no date).
- (ix) RIA 23 M 24 (M), pp. 35-42; possibly written by Edward O Reilly.
- (x) RIA 3 C 13 (C), pp. 548-63; written by Eugene O Curry, 1848.

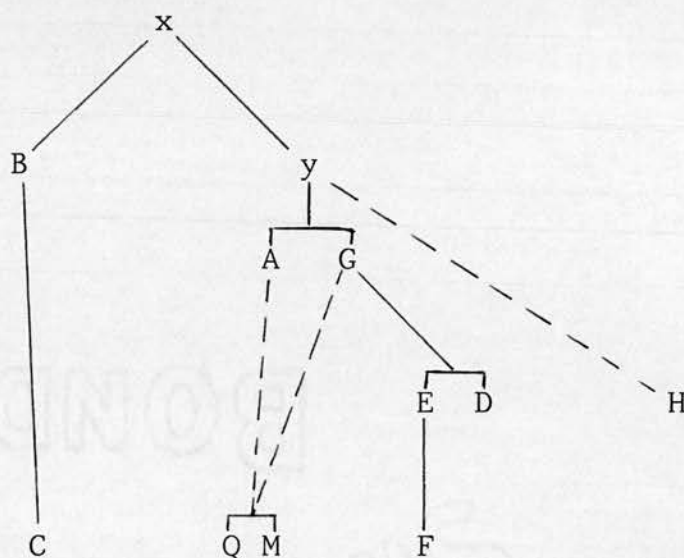
C is a copy of B. All the other eight manuscripts constitute a single family, all of the texts being extremely close to each other to such an extent that it is impossible, on textual grounds alone to establish a stemma. A and G are contemporary copies by the same scribe. A was once in the possession of Edward O Reilly⁷² and it may be that Q and M derive from it. On the other hand they might equally derive from G which was also in the possession of O Reilly.⁷³ G was also in the possession of Muiris Ó Gormain⁷⁴ and so one might postulate that E and D derive from it.

⁷² RIA Catg., 427.

⁷³ NLI Catg. iv, 34.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

It is probable that F derives from E.⁷⁵ The exemplar for H does not appear to have survived.⁷⁶ It is thus possible to produce a tentative stemma based on these non-textual considerations; 'x' is the archetype and a 'y' the hyparchetype from which the manuscripts in the major family we have been discussing derive.



The accuracy of such a stemma is not of great importance, however, as the texts in the y-family correspond so closely to each other. It is therefore a simple matter of selecting the oldest manuscript in the group to represent the family. I have chosen A for this purpose though G could also have been used to equal effect.

On the whole B preserves readings which are far better than A. It also has two quatrains which are absent in A: qq. 30 and 36. I have therefore based my edition on B with variants given from A.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Br. Lib. Catg.* ii, 357.

⁷⁶ See *RIA Catg.*, 2460.

Wherever A preserves a better reading - e.g. qq. 27c, 35d, 48d, 52b, 65c, 66b - these have been incorporated in the text.

Metre deibhidhe, dán díreach.

- 1 Lubhghort fíneamhna fuil Ír,
dlig^hid umhla ar gach éintír,
urraim suas aca uile,
slata go gcnuas chumhruidhe.
- 2 Lubhghort fíneamhna fuair geall,
fuil Ír, tar uaislibh Éireann;
ríoghroidh chosnamha chláir Ghréag,
orsanna cáigh do choimhéad.
- 3 Slata tēagair Theamhrach Breagh,
gabhla fulaing mhac Míleadh,
croinn dob fhudhnocht don uile,
lubhghort do choill chumhroidhe.

1 The stock of Íor are as a vineyard, it is their right [to impose] submission on every single territory, at every stage of their history they have all achieved distinction, branches with fragrant fruit.

2 The stock of Íor, a vineyard which received a pledge above [all] the nobility of Éire; kings who protect the Grecian plain, pillars which defend all.

3 Protecting branches of Teamhair Breagh, enduring supports of the sons of Míl, trees which sheltered all, an enclosure for a fragrant wood.

Heading: Feargal Óg Mac an Bhaird .cc. B A.

- 1 a Luibhghort fhineamhna A; b dlig^hidh A; ar] om. A; c uirruim A; d ccubhruidhe B, ccumhrighe A.
- 2 a Luibhghoirt A; b tair uaisle A; c cosamhna A; d uirsanna caich A.
- 3 a dteagar B, teagair A; Theamhrach] banbha A; b foluing B, fulaing A; mhic A; c fodhnocht B, fhuignocht A; d lobhghort B, luibhghoirt A; chomhraighthe A.

- 4 Uaithneadha iarthoir dhomhain,
 cosnamhaigh chláir Chonchobhair,
 roighne gasroidhe beann mBreagh,
 dream dán casmhoile creideamh.
- 5 Croinn phailme Pharrthais Ádhaimh,
 lucht uaislighthe a n-annálaidh,
 na réaltona ó ráith na bhFionn,
 éantogha cháich go coitcheann.
- 6 Guaiseabhaic fár ghēis an Lia,
 leaga uaisle na h-India,
 sluaigh mhēarchorra Mhoighe Rath,
 fēathlonna toighe Teamhrach.

4 Pillars of the western world, defenders of
 Conchobhar's plain, choice of the soldiery of the
 hills of Breagha, a host most likely to be accorded
 credence.

5 Palm-trees of Adam's Paradise, exalters of their
 annals, the luminaries from the fort of the Fair Ones,
 the only choice of everyone in general.

6 Dangerous hawks under whom the Lia screamed, noble
 jewels of India, hosts of Magh Rath with tapered
 fingers, woodbines of the house of Teamhair.

- 4 b conchubhair A; c ghasraighthe A; mbreagha A; d
 cosmhaile A.
- 5 a fpailme B, phailme A; fpartais B, pharrthuis A;
 Adhamh A; b lucht] luin A; andanalaigh B,
 anannalaigh A; c realtanna A; bhfionn A; d aon
 togha A;
- 6 a Guaisseabhaic B, Guaissheabhaic A; fár ... Lia]
 pharguis fhinnlia A; b hinnia A; c mhēarchorra A;
 muighe B, mhuighe A; fēithlionnadh thoighe A.

- 7 Dlighid i n-aoineacht uile
bheith umhal d'fhuil Rudhruighe,
laoich lér lēirthileadh fiadh Floinn,
gach ēinchineadh riamh romhoinn.
- 8 Comhtha ar gach airdrígh oile
ma gcuairt ag Cloinn Rudhraighe -
caora buadha tolcha an Trír -
's gan chomhtha uadha d'airdrígh.
- 9 Slēachtuin d'uaislibh innsi Breagh
ar son nach dlighthear dhíbhsean,
ríoghradh chláir éachtuigh Eine,
slēachtuin dháibh do dlighfidhe.

7 Every single race that ever was should,
collectively, be submissive to the stock of
Rudhraighe, warriors who completely dominated the land
of Flann.

8 Clann Rudhraighe - precious jewels of the hill of
the Three - impose ransoms on every other neighbouring
ruler, and no ransoms are given from them to [any]
ruler.

9 Though they themselves are not required to submit
to the nobles of the island of Breagha, one is obliged
to submit to them, the kings of the heroic plain of
Eine.

7. a Dlighidh A; einfheacht A; b bheith] a bhfuil A;
rughruidhe B, rughraighe A; d sgach aonchineadh A;
romhuin A.
- 8 a airdríogh B, airdrigh A; eile A; b ma] fa A;
rughruidhe B, rughraigh A; c triar A; d comhtha
uatha A.
- 9 b dlighthar dhibhsein A; c righ righ chlar A;
éuchtuidh B, eachtaigh A; eithne A; d doibh do
dlighfeadh A.

- 10 Ní dhligheann éanchlann oile
coimeas re Cloinn Rudhruighe;
aca féine is gnáth an geall,
slata réidhe ó ráth Raoileann.
- 11 Ní thiocfa, 's ní thāinig riamh,
a gcomaith do chrīch Ghailian;
fíorbhun don fhēile uile
rīoghradh fhréimhe Rudhruighe.
- 12 Leabhair Fhódla, ceann i gceann,
naoimh is ollamhuin Éireann -
cuire lē bhfoghar gach fáidh -
'ga moladh uile d'éanláimh.

10 No other race deserves to be compared with Clann Rudhraighe; the pledge is always theirs alone, smooth branches from the fort of Raoilinn.

11 None as good as them will, or has ever, come of the land of Gailioin; the kings of the race of Rudhraighe are the very foundation of all generosity.

12 The books of Fódla, one after another, the saints and poets of Éire - a group to which all prophets are exclusive - are praising them all in unison.

- 10 a aonchlann eile A; b comeas le A; rughruidhe B, rughraighe A; c fein A; gnath e A; an] A, om. B. d réidh A; raoithleann A.
- 11 ā thiucfaidh A; tainic B, thainic A; b ccomaith B, ccomhmaith A; do ch. Gh.] sa ccomhfhiall A; c don] na A; d rioghrigh A; réimhe B, fhréimhe A; ruigruidhe B, rughraighthe A.
- 12 a fhódhla B, fodhla A; c bhfoghtar B, bhfaghthar A; déinlaimh B, déanláimh A.

- 13 Do-chuaidh a gclú fán gcruinne:
comaith Chloinne Rudhraighe,
an mhacraidh ó mhúr na bhFionn,
nír shaltair úr na h-Éireann.
- 14 Do dhearbhadh a ndubhairt mē:
éan dár chomhainm Cearc Bhoirche,
fuil Ír, tar an uile bhfear,
díbh an duine lér dáileadh.
- 15 Neach dhíobh tug a éangha uaidh,
is fir Éirionn i n-éanúair,
craobh tharuidh do thogh gach fáidh,
ag cor 'na aghaidh d'éanláimh.

13 Their fame has gone around the world: the equals of Clann Rudhraighe, the youthful warriors from the rampart of the Fair Ones, never trod the soil of Éire.

14 To prove what I have said: of the stock of Íor, above all other men, was the man who gifted a bird known as Cearc Bhoirche.

15 It was one of them, fruitful branch who was the choice of every poet, who gave away his only spear just as the men of Éire were simultaneously attacking him.

- 13 b commaith B, comhmaith A; rughraidhe B, rughraighthe A; c mhacrigh A; bfhionn A; d shaltar úir A.
- 14 a dhearbhadh A; b an chearc A; c fear B, fhear A; d dhíobh A.
- 15 a thug A; a] om. BA; aonghath uadh A; b aonúair A; c toruidh B, thoraidh A; do thogh le bhfuil A; d cur BA; daonlaimh A.

- 16 Tug uaidh an fear céadna a cheann,
ar son clú, dia do dhícheall,
do mhac ochta fhian n-Uladh
riar rē̄r dhocra dealughadh.
- 17 Re sliocht n-Ír is adhbhar tnuídh:
neach dhíobh tug uadha a éanshúil,
geall ag an tí do thoirbhir,
rí dob fhearr fa athchoinghidh.
- 18 Neach dob fhearr i n-inis Ír,
díobh fós Cuanna mac Coilchín;
comaith Chuanna riamh roimhe
ní chuala d'fhiadh Iúghoine.

16 What endeavour: for the sake of fame the same man gave his head to the darling of the warrior-bands of the Ulaidh, generosity from which it would be most difficult to part.

17 A reason to be envious of the line of Íor: one of them gave away his only eye, he who gave it surpassed all, a king best in the matter of [granting] a request.

18 Yet again of their stock was Cuanna son of Coilchín, the best in the island of Íor; I have not heard that Cuanna's equal ever sprang from the land of Iughoine.

- 16 a uadh following céadna A; b a chliú A; dhithcheall BA; c mhac A; u^ladh BA; d deacra A.
- 17 a Le A; tnuith A; b uadh A; d fhearr A; athchuingidh A.
- 18 a innis A; b sdiobh A; coilcín A; c commaith B, a chomhmaith A; d a niath A.

- 19 Dīobh Fear Dorcha mac Domhnaill,
sás iomchuir gach anfhorlainn,
caor bhuidhe chlāir na gcuradh,
Guaire cáigh do chothughadh.
- 20 Gá dtám ris? - rugadair sin
geall féile agus geall gaisgidh,
ríoghradh thoghtha bhruaigh Bheannchuir;
buidh ortha tar Éireannchaibh.
- 21 Gá beag dhūinn, dá dhearbhadh soin,
go gcuireadh éanlaoch d'Ulltoibh -
ní tearc duine lē ndearbhthair -
a neart uile ar Éireannchaibh?

19 Of their stock is Fear Dorcha son of Domhnall, one able to endure every hardship, precious jewel of the plain of the warriors, a Guaire who sustains all.

20 In short, they, the elected kings of Beannchor's shore, excelled in hospitality and valour; they are supreme above Irishmen.

21 To prove that - [and] there is no scarcity of individuals by whom it is proven - is it not sufficient for us that one hero of the Ulaidh should impose his total supremacy on Irishmen?

- 19 a Sdiobh A; c bhuadha A; d cháigh B, chaich A; chathughadh B, chothughadh A.
- 20 a acht rugadar A; c ríoghraidh toghtha bhruach A; d orrtha A.
- 21 a dhuin B, dhuinne A; sin A; b aonlaoch A; c lē] da A.

- 22 Leó do thuit siad, ceann i gceann,
 forgla airdrīogh na h-Éireann
 's Rí an Domhain ō mhuir go muir:
 is foghail í nach íocthair.
- 23 Cūirte daingne an domhain thoir,
 do lingthī iad le h-Ulltuibh,
 is Carn Balair uair oile,
 is bruaigh chaluidh Chorcúighe.
- 24 Ō Mhuir dToirrian na dtrácht dte
 do ghabhdaois go bruach mBóinne,
 's ō Bhóinn ghéigleabhair bhinn bhrais
 go Rinn n-éigneadhúigh n-Iorruis.

22 By them were slain successively the best of the supreme kings of Éire and the King of the World from sea to sea: a depredation not requited.

23 The fortified palaces of the eastern world were wont to be overcome by the Ulstermen, and Carn Balair on another occasion, and the shores of the harbour of Cork.

24 They were wont to conquer from the Mediterranean of the warm beaches to the bank of the Bóinn, and from the sweet, rushing Bóinn of the long branches to Rinn Iorruis where salmon abound.

- 22 a Sleó A; b airdrigh; c 's Rí an] is fir A; d is foghail i] ag sin foghail A; íocuir A.
 23 c car A; eile BA; d bruach A; corcuidhe B, choirce A.
 24 a ttorrian A; na dtrácht dte] uair eile A; b do ghabh siad A; boinne A; c mbinn mbrais A; d sgo ruinn néignigh.

- 25 Ó chiomhsuibh Lochlann i-le,
 leó nīr fág**h**adh fiú an mhíle,
 siar go h-eirr mhuighe Mumhan,
 don chrui**n**ne gan chu**a**rtug**h**adh.
- 26 Laoich gan chruas acht cruas cogaidh,
 is é a chríoch gur chosnadair,
 gasradh sheó**l**ta Shí**d**he Lir,
 rīghe na h-Eó**r**pa ar ēigin.
- 27 Dá mbeinn feadh bliadhna go beacht
 ag ríomh a n-ēacht i n-aoineacht,
 na laoich lér dāileadh fiadh Floinn
 a dtrian d'áireamh nī fhéadfuinn.

25 Not even a mile of the globe was left untraversed by them, from the limits of Lochlann westwards hither to the extremity of the plain of Munster.

26 Warriors whose only hardness was hardness in battle, accomplished soldiery of Síodh Lir, to sum up, they gained by force the kingship of Europe.

27 Were I recounting their exploits all together for a period of exactly a year, the heroes by whom the land of Flann was apportioned, I would fail to enumerate [even] a third of them.

- 25 a So chiubhsaibh Lachlann a leith A; b leó] om. A; fhaigsiad fós A; c h-eirr mhuighe] hiārmhuighe A; d ccruinne A.
- 26 ā chruas A; b a] om. A; chosnaighdar A; c gasraigh A; shithe A; d rīghe A.
- 27 a mbeidhinn A; b (i om.) néinfheacht A; c lér dāileadh] A, dar leónadh B.

- 28 Gē a-tā i gcartaigh chloinne h-Ír
faghāil umhla ó gach éintír,
a-tā ag Aodh umhlocht orra,
craobh do lubhghort Liathdroma.
- 29 Gé fuair siadsan geall Gaoidheal,
tug cách, ó's dá chomaidheamh,
an geall d'aonúine uile,
aodhaire bheann mBóruimhe.
- 30 Ō fuair geall fhrēimhe Rosa
cia is mheadh do Mhág Aonghusa? -
sé ós chách, mar is cubhaidh,
gnáth an ré ós réaltanuibh.

28 Though it is the chartered right of the descendants of Íor to obtain submission from every single country, they [sc. clann Ír] owe submission to Aodh, branch from the garden of Liathdroim.

29 Though they received the pledge of the Gaoidhil, every one, since we are proclaiming it, has given total submission to one man, the shepherd of the hills of Bóruimhe.

30 Since he has gained the supremacy of the line of Ros, who is the equal of Mág Aonghusa? - he [is] above everyone, as is proper, like the moon above [the] stars .

- 28 a ta A; b aontír A; c ta A; d luibhgort liatroma A.
- 29 a gaoidhil A; b comaidheamh B, ccomhmaidheamh A; c daondhuinē B, daon nduine A; eile A.
- 30 om. A. a reimhe B.

- 31 A ndubhradh riamh, maith budh mhó,
re neach d'Éirinn, i n-aonló
do sháraigh cleath chró a chinidh:
neach 'na chló ní cuirfidhir.
- 32 Fear Dorcha mac Domhnaill Óig
nach tug re filidh fíormhóid,
slat dochaithmhe is fhearr don fhiodh,
ceann cothuighthe mac Míleadh.
- 33 Aodh mac Domhnaill, dreach corcra,
glún deiridh na daonachta,
go dtí an bráth ní bēarthaoi a gheall
dā bhfēaghthaoi cách go coitcheann.

31 All that was ever attributed to one of the Irish, the greatest achievement, the pillar of the lands of his race has surpassed in one day: none will [ever] be comparable to him.

32 Fear Dorcha, son of Domhnall Óg, who never showed real displeasure towards a poet, eternal branch, best of the wood, sustaining leader of the sons of Míl.

33 Aodh son of Domhnall, purple countenance, last bastion of benevolence, though everyone in general were to be considered he would [still] never be excelled.

- 31 a mó A; c sháraidh B, sháraigh A; cleith A; d chuirfighther A.
- 32 b ttug BA; fíle A: c dothchaithmhe A; is] dob A; bhfiodh A; d mhic A.
- 33 b glúin dhírih A; c bhearthaoi A; a] om. A; d bhfeachaigh A.

- 34 Mar théid fíneamhain tar fíodh
do-chuaidh ōs chionn mhac Míleadh;
eineach Gaoidheal cláir Chríomhthain
do bháidh aoinfhear d'Éirionnchaibh.
- 35 Dā dhearbhadh gurab é is fhearr,
caithfid ollamhuin Éireann,
sgiath na bhfēinneadh ón taobh thuaidh,
déineamh ar Aodh an athuair.
- 36 Oighre Subhaltuigh, mar soin,
ar ollamhnaibh fhóid Fhionntoin,
ursa an tsluaigh ón Bhóinn bhreaclais,
do fhóir ar uair n-éigeantais.

34 As a vine is superior to a tree, so he rose above the sons of Míl; one man of the Irish has outshone the honour of the Gaoidhil of the plain of Criomhthan.

35 As proof that he is the best, the poets of Éire will be obliged to resort to Aodh yet again, the shield of the warriors from the north.

36 Thus, Subhatach's heir, support of the host from the sparkling blue Bóinn, succoured the poets of Fionntan's land in time of need.

34 a fhíodh A; b mhic A; c eineach] einfher A; críomhthuinn A; d do bháth A.

35 a fearr A; b caithfidh BA; c bhinneadh A; c déanamh BA; an athuair] A, a nenuair (on an erasure) B.

36 om. A. c tshluaigh B; bhreacghlais B.

- 37 Oighre Subhaltach, searc bhan,
 filidh Fódla i nDún Dealgan
 do fhosd géag Íle, mās fhīor;
 mīle is dā chéad a gcoimhlíon.
- 38 Seacht mbliadhna dóibh, 'na dhiaidh soin,
 ag deagmhac Fhachtna Fháthaigh
 gan dol uadha soir nó siar:
 ó shoin ní chuala a choimhfhial.
- 39 Do dībreadh fós, feacht oile,
 filidh innsi h-Iúghoine,
 dóibh dob umhal an trian tuaidh,
 go fiadh n-Uladh an athuair.

37 Apparently, Subhaltach's heir, scion of Íle, beloved of women, retained the poets of Fódla in Dún Dealgan; one thousand two hundred was their number.

38 After that they spent seven years with the goodly son of Fachtna Fáthach without leaving him to go east or west: I have not heard of anyone as generous as him since that time.

39 On another occasion the poets of the island of Iúghoine were again banished to the land of Ulster a second time; the northern territory accepted them.

- 37 a subhailtigh A; ban A; b file A; fodhla BA; c fhosd] fhoid A; gheig A; ma B, mas A; d ccomhlíon A.
- 38 a dhoibh A; dhiaigh sin BA; b fheachtna B, fachtna A; fathaigh A; d ccoimhfhial A.
- 39 a eile A; b filídhíbh A; c dhoibh A; thuaidh A; d fiadh B, hīath A; Uladh A.

40 Fiacha mac Baodáin go mbuaidh
do chonguibh iad an athuair;
sé ar mhéin na ríochraobh roimhe,
fíonchaor do fhréimh Rudhraighe.

41 An treas uair, ní iúl folaigh,
ionnarbthar na h-ollamhuin -
leō do h-ionnradh fonn Fódla -
drong nárbh iongnadh d'fhurfhógra.

42 Maol Cobha ceann cloinne h-Ír,
trí bliadhna iad 'gan airdrígh,
im shēad nír donnadh a dhreach,
dā chéad déag ollamh uaibhreach.

40 The victorious Fiacha son of Baodán maintained them the second time; he was of the same mettle as the royal branches before him, grape of the line of Rudhraighe.

41 The poets are expelled a third time, it is no secret, a crowd whose banishment was no surprise - they had plundered the land of Fódla.

42 Maol Cobha, head of the descendants of Íor, his face was never caused to blush in the matter of [bestowing] wealth, twelve hundred haughty poets spent three years with the supreme king.

40 b connuibh B, coinnimh A; c ríoghcraobh A; d fíonnchaor A; rughraighe B, rughraigh A.

41 a hiúil falaigh A; b íonar**bh**thar A; hollamhainn A; c fódhla BA.

42 a chabha A; chloinne A; c im] um A; d dha A.

- 43 \bar{O} sin i-le, l $\bar{o}r$ do bhloidh,
 geall fhear n-Éireann ag Ulltaibh,
 fréamh an einigh, leath ar leath,
 na deighfhir n $\bar{a}r$ éar aoineach.
- 44 Gach uair d $\bar{a}r$ h-ionnarbadh ionn,
 fuil Ír, d'aimhdheóin fhear n-Éirionn,
 is iad soin do fh $\bar{e}ag$ oirne,
 an tr $\bar{e}ad$ ó mhoigh M \bar{h} odhairne.
- 45 Iar sin, ar son ar gcabhra,
 tugamur t $\bar{u}s$ ealadhna,
 ó's Ulltoigh do uaisligh ionn,
 d'Ulltoibh tar uaislibh Éirionn.

43 Since then - what fame! - the pledge of the men of Éire is with the Ulstermen, the root of honour, the goodly men who, successively, did not refuse anyone.

44 Each time we were banished it was they, the stock of Íor, the people from the plain of the Modharn, who supported us despite the men of Éire.

45 Since then, as it is the Ulster people who honoured us, we have given them priority in [our] art in preference to the nobility of Éire, in return for helping us.

- 43 a a leith le $\bar{o}r$ do bhlaidh A; c freamha A; d aoinneach B, éinneach A.
- 44 a hionnarbadh A; inn BA; b fear A; neirinn B, neirionn A; c soin] om. A; fheagh B, fheadh A; d treadh A.
- 45 b thugamar A; c olltaigh do uaisle A; inn B, sinn A; d éirinn B, éirionn A.

- 46 Tús molta ón lósoin i-le
ag cloinn Ír d'éis a chéile,
's tús ag Aodh uathaibh uile,
craobh o Thuathaibh Toruidhe.
- 47 Dā mbeath gan Aodh d'aicme Ír,
tús d'fhaghāil tar gach n-airdrígh,
gruaidh shídhe lé bhfuil gach fáidh,
do thuir Íle nírbh fhuláir.
- 48 Fada do bhī Banbha Bhreagh
i gcartaigh ag a chineadh;
níorbh fholāir do bhaidhbh Bheannchoir
gairm d'fhoghāil tar Éireannchoibh.

46 Thenceforth the descendants of Ír in succession have priority in the matter of [poet's] praise and Aodh, branch from Tuatha Toruidhe, has precedence of all of them.

47 Even if Aodh were not of the stock of Íor, the pillar of Íle, splendid cheek to which every poet adheres, would [still] inevitably gain precedence over every supreme king.

48 Long has Breagha's Banbha been in the charter of his race; the warrior of Beannchar must of necessity receive preferment above [all] Irishmen.

- 46 a mollta A; -sin BA; a leith A; c aodha uatha A.
47 ā dhaicme A; b adhfaghail A; gach n-lan A; c
shithe A; d nírbh] A, nior B.
48 a bhreadha A; c sniorbh fulair A; d dfaghail A;
tar] A, re n- B.

- 49 Naoi gcéad bliadhuin, deóigh i ndeóigh,
d'fhuil Rosa, ní rádh aineóil,
gasroidh fhionn na ngéireann nglan,
ōs chionn Éireann is Uladh.
- 50 Go gcaithtí an saoghal, mar soin,
do bhiath, dā mbeidīs d'éantoil,
Banbha aca diaidh i ndiaidh,
na slata abhla d'éinchriaidh.
- 51 Cur riú um cheannus gcrīche Breagh
nír fhóbradur meic Mhíleadh,
na tréinfhir ó bhruach Bhanna,
fuath gur ēirigh eatorra.

49 It is well-known that for nine hundred successive years the stock of Ros, fair warriors of the bright, sharp spears, have been pre-eminent over Éire and the Ulaidh.

50 Thus, if the[se] apple-trees, [sprung] from single soil, were of one mind, Banbha would be theirs in continuous succession until the end of the world.

51 The sons of Míl did not attempt to dispute the supremacy of the territory of Breagha with them, the warriors from the shore of the Banna, until enmity arose between them.

- 49 a bliadhna A; b rossa sní A; c ngéirreann B, mbeimionn A; glonn A; d cionn A.
- 50 a ccaitígh A; sin A; b do bhíadh A; daontoil A; c diaigh a ndiaigh BA; d a haonchriaidh A.
- 51 a criche B, chriche A; breadh A; b obradar A; mic BA; c Bhanna] banbha A; d eirghe eotarra A.

- 52 N^ó gur dhóir^ítsiod féin a bhfuil,
do bhiadh, d'aimhdheóin fhear ndomhuin,
slata réidhe mhuighe Máil,
Éire uile 'na n-orláimh.
- 53 Ríoghradh éachtach bhruaigh Bhanna,
ceilfidh ar fhás eatorra
teacht 'na ndiaidh don Aodh Eanghach,
craobh do chriaidh na claoinTeamhrach.
- 54 Bráighe gill fhréimhe Rosa
is é Aodh ó h-Aonghusa,
is Aodh Eanghach dá fhine:
naomh Teamhrach dā thairngire.

52 Until they themselves spilt their [own] blood,
smooth scions of the plain of Máil, all of Éire used to
be in their possession in spite of the men of [the]
world.

53 Valorous kings of the shore of the Banna, what has
arisen between them will obstruct the accession after
them of the Aodh Eanghach, branch of the soil of
sloping Teamhair.

54 Aodh descendant of Aonghus is the pledged hostage
of the line of Ros and [the] Aodh Eanghach of his
race: the saint of Teamhair prophecies it.

- 52 a dhoirt siad A; féin] om. A; b ndomhuin] A,
núladh B; c mhuigh A; d norláimh] A, norrláimh B.
- 53 a Ríoghrigh A; bruach A; b ceilidh A; c ndiaigh B,
A; eangach A; d chaidh A; claon- A.
- 54 a ghill A; fhréimhe] A, réimhe B; Rossa A; b
haonghusa A; c eangach A.

- 55 Íbh Eathach na gcleath gcumhra,
 uirre ad-chiam a chomhardha,
 is é a h-Aodh an t-Aodh Iodhan,
 sé ag gach aon dá fhoillsioghadh.
- 56 Na croinn lúbtha lán do mhil;
 na linnte lán do mhaighribh;
 na tolcha fa Dhún nDroma
 gan chlūmh orrtha acht iothlanna.
- 57 Grian gheimhridh im Beinn mBoirche:
 tráighidh eas le h-éanoidhche;
 san taoibh thoir, go nuaidhe a-niodh,
 is-toigh is fhuaire aimsior!

55 Íbh Eathach of the fragrant trees, on her we see
 its sign, everything is proclaiming it: her Aodh is
 the Aodh Iodhan.

56 The trees bent, loaded with honey; the lakes
 brimming with salmon; the hills around Dún Droma
 covered not with vegetation but with [full] granaries.

57 Winter sunshine around Beann Bhoirche: a waterfall
 dries up overnight; lately, in the eastern territory
 the weather is coldest indoors!

- 55 a gcleith A; b do chiam A; a] om. A; comhartha A;
 d ag] os A; do fhuillsiughadh A.
- 56 a luptha A, lupta B; b sna linntibh A; c sna
 tulcha A; droma BA; d chluimh A; orra A.
- 57 a geimhrigh A; um bh. bh. A; b traghaidh eass A;
 haonoidhche A; c taobh shoir go nuaidh A; aníogh
 B, A; d isdith A; fuaire A; an aimsir A.

58 Trí ceóil nach neiminn le neach:
gotha a sreabh, faoidhe a fírbheach -
críoch na dtrágh ngainmhidhe nglan -
is glár ainglidhe a h-ealtan.

59 Na tolcha fa chleith gCabha
lán do leagaibh lóghmhara;
taisdil mhuighe cúirte An Chaoil,
ní fhúigfe duine dīomhaoín.

60 Ní fearthar faoi acht frais do mhil,
do-chuaidh cosg ar ghaoith ngeimhridh,
gā meisde teagh gan tuighe
re seal bhfleisge Fearnmhuighe?

58 Three melodies which nobody considers unsweet: the sounds of her streams, the humming of her splendid bees - land of the bright, sandy beaches - and the heavenly song of her birds.

59 The hills around the chief of Cabha [are] full of precious stones; the gentle, beloved one of the plain of the court of An Caol will leave no man poor.

60 Under his rule no shower pours forth save showers of honey, the winter wind has been quelled, what harm is a roofless house during the reign of the scion of Fearnmhagh.

- 58 a Trí] om. A; Ceol A; neimbinn B, neamhbhinn A; b a...a] om. A; sreibh A; c ngaimnhigh A; nglan] om. A; d glár] ceol A; healtāin A.
59 a tūlcha A; chabha B, chabhtha A; c mhuighe] A, mhuidhe B; chuirte A; d fhúicfe BA.
60 b gheimhrih A; c ca mīside toigh gan toighe A; d re] le A; fleisgē BA.

- 61 Mór n-airdríogh ma a earla nocht,
ní h-iongnadh rath 'na ríoghocht,
bláth na gcraobh ón Bhaoill bhaillghil
nach maoidh ar aon athchuinghidh.
- 62 Ocht rígh dhéag, mar deir an sdair,
's trí fichid ríogh do ríoghaibh,
rug céim tar gach n-aon oile
im Aodh san réim ríoghroidhe.
- 63 Gach airdrī dār āirimh mē,
tig dhíobh i ndiaidh a chéile
díol Gaoidhiol uile d'oighre:
saoirfhear mhuighe Modhoirne.

61 Many are the supreme kings around his uncovered head, it is no surprise that there is prosperity in his kingdom, blossom of the trees from the bright, sparkling Baoill who begrudges not a single supplication.

62 As history relates, in the king-list there are seventy eight kings around Aodh who ascended above all others.

63 All the supreme kings whom I have reckoned, from them in succession comes an heir worthy of all the Gaoidhil: [the] nobleman of the plain of the Modharn.

- 61 a ardrigh A; man A; earlaimh A; c bhaillghil] ghil B, mhallghil A; d nar mhaoith ar aon chor acfuinnigh A.
- 62 a ri B, righthe A; adeir A; b is B, A; ri B, righ A; righthibh A; c aon eile A; d im] um A; rioghraigh A.
- 63 a ardrigh A; aireamh A; (b and c transposed in A); b tig dhíobh] aig diall A; ndiaigh BA; c gaoidhil A; d na saorfhir o mhuigh A.

- 64 Rí oirbheartach fhola h-Ír,
measuim é ris gach n-airdrígh
dār ghabh Banbha riamh roimhe;
cian ó tharla i dtarrngoire.
- 65 Niall dár fearadh na frasa
measuim re Māg n-Aonghasa;
nír thearc aon dod reic romhaibh,
deit a Aodh is ionnamhail.
- 66 Ríot do mheasfuinn, eacht oile,
Murchadh mac Briain Bhóroimhe,
nó Conaire nár mhuidh mionn,
a thuir romhuighe Raoilinn.

64 Illustrious king of the blood of Íor, I liken him
to every supreme king who ever before ruled Banbha;
long has he been prefigured.

65 Niall, on whose account the showers poured forth,
I liken to Māg Aonghasa; o Aodh he is your
prefiguration, not few were those who were foretelling
you before your time.

66 O pillar of the great plain of Raoilinn, in
another era to you I would compare Murchadh son of
Brian Boróimhe, or Conaire who did not break a pledge.

- 64 a Rígh A; fhola Ír A; b measam A; ardrígh A; c
ghabh banbha A; d ttairngire A.
- 65 b measam le A; aonghusa B, aongusa A; c snior A;
dod] A, do B; d aodh dheit is deāghsamhail A.
- 66 a feacht eile A; b Bhóroimhe] A, bhóromha B; c
mhuidh] maoith A; d thir A; raoilinn A.

- 67 A throigh lúthmhar lingear troid,
a mheic Í Dhuibhne, a Dhiarmuid,
a shéad buaidhe, a thráigh thoraidh,
a Ghuaire chláir Chonchobhair;
- 68 A Naoise, a Chonuill Chearnuigh,
a mheic Róich ó ríghTheamhrugh,
an bhfuil aonúine ar chlú id chuing? -
a Laoghaire, a Chú Chluinn;
- 69 A Osgair re h-eadh ngábhuigh,
a Eachtair, a Iollánuigh,
a Dhā Thí fhréimhe Rosa,
is í th'fhéile th'ionnmhusa.

67 O swift foot victorious in battle, o son of Ó
Duibhne, o Diarmuid, o precious jewel, o fruitful
shore, o Guaire of the plain of Conchubhar;

68 O Naoise, o Conall Cearnach, o son of Róach from
royal Teamhair, is there anyone your equal in the
matter of fame? - o Laoghaire, o Cú Chluinn;

69 O Osgar in time of danger, o Hector, o Iollánach,
o Dá Thí of the line of Ros, it is your generosity
which is your wealth.

- 67 a lingis A; b mic BA; c sa traighe A.
- 68 a naois sa A; b mheic] A, mheic B; roigh A; ríogh-
A; c aondhuine B; sgan aon nduine ar chliu da
chuing A; d Laoghaire] A, laoghair B; chluin A.
- 69 a ngabhaigh A; b eadhchair with transposition
marks under dhch B; sa hector ioldhanaigh A; c
réimhe B, fhreimh A; rossa A.

- 70 A lámh is éinmhionn d'Ultaibh,
a dheaghchroidhe dhaonnachtaigh,
a bheithir fhóid bheannchuirr Bhreagh,
a chearchuill na gcóig gcóigeadh;
- 71 A chloch chūil iarthoir Eórpa,
a bhárc dhaingean dhoileónta,
a bhláth coillbhileadh bheann mBreagh
dār toirbhíreadh geall Gaoidheal;
- 72 A thonn rabharta ós chionn chuain,
a thráigh ionnola an athuair;
a chroidhe is daingne ag dáil shleagh,
a mhaighre ó Thrāigh na dTréinfhear;

70 O hand which is the only treasure of Ulstermen, o kind, goodly heart, o bear of the land of the pointed hills of Breagha, o pillow of the five provinces;

71 O supporting stone of western Europe, o sturdy, unsinkable ship, o flower of the hazel-trees of the hills of Breagha to whom the pledge of the Gaoidhil has been yielded;

72 O flood-tide covering the shore, o traversable beach the next moment; o heart most firm when plying spears, o salmon from Trāigh na dTréinfhear.

- 70 a laimh ar aonmhionn dolltach A; b see notes; c bheannchor A; d ccoīgidh A.
- 71 b dhaīngin A; c collbhile beann mbreagha A; d toirbhrid A; ngaidheal B, gaoīdhil A.
- 72 a rabhartha A; b iondholā B, inealta A; d thraighe A.

- 73 A nathair neartmhar nimhe,
a leóghan ar láidire,
sgéal fa dheóigh ní fhoghaim ort
a eóin choluim ar cheannsacht.
- 74 A thosach clú fhear n-Oiligh,
a dheiridh an deaghoinigh;
gan neach ret fhéile ag iomaidh
leath t'fhéile nír āirmheamair.
- 75 A mheic Eilísi, a fholt fionn,
a shearc óiginghean Éirionn,
tug gach duine aghaidh ort
mar shamhail luibhe i lubhghort.

73 O mighty venomous serpent, o lion in strength, o dove in kindness, in summary, I find no fault with you.

74 O alpha of the fame of the men of Oileach, o omega of goodly honour; no-one rivals your generosity [and] we have not [even] treated of half of it.

75 O son of Eilís, o fair-haired one, o love of the young women of Éire, as [to] a herb in a herb-garden everyone ^{has} turned to you.

- 73 a nathir neartmhar neimhe A; b leomhain A; c fagham A; d eóin acholuim ar ānsacht A.
- 74 a thoiseach cliú A; naoileach A; b deagheinigh A; c gan] gach A; ag iomradh A; d leith A; airiomar A.
- 75 a an fhuilt fhionn A; c adhaigh A; d luibhghort A.

76 A Pheadair, a chruth corcra,
a dhoirseóir na daonnachta,
bíoth do ghrás tar mh'uile n-olc
ag fás mar luibhe i lubhghort.

77 Truagh do bheith fān lia luighe,
a mheic ríogh fhóid Aolmhuighe,
gan aighthe dāmh im fhíon ort;
far-íor, ní lán do lubhghort.

LUBHGHORT FINEAMH

76 O Peter, o purple hue, o door-keeper of kindness,
despite my every sin may your grace grow like herbs in
a herb-garden.

77 O son of the ruler of the territory of Aolmhagh,
it is sad that you are beneath the grave-slab without
poets' faces turned towards you at wine-drinking;
alas, your herb-garden is empty.

76 a fpeadair B, pheadair A; chorcra A; b daonachta
A; c bíoth] bhí A; mh'uile] an uile; olc BA; d
luibhghort A.

77 a fa A; luidhe B, do luidhe A; b mheic] A, mhc B;
righ A; aoilmhuighe A; d faraor A; luibhghort A.

V Notes

1 a For lubhghort fíneamhna 'a vineyard' cf. 'do rinneadar coimhéaduigh a lubhghoirt fhíneamhna dhíomsa, [acht] níor choimhead mé mfíneamhuin féin'. (Bedell) which translates 'The Song of Solomon', 1:6, 'they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept' (King James). In qq. 75-7 lubhghort retains its original meaning.

Ír, nom. Íor, son of Míl, to whom Clann Rudhraighe traced their descent; cf. Corp. Gen., 269-70, and Fearghal Óg's poem 'Ar sliocht trír atáid Gaoidhil' passim.

b dlighid (dlighidh A) When the subject is a collective noun (e.g. 'sluagh', 'fuil' etc.) the verb may be either sg. or pl.; cf. BST 192.13-14; IGT v. 133. The pl. verb here is supported by aca and slata.

c For the sense of suas here see DIL S, 404.12-20.

2 b The rime fuil:ríoghroidh could be avoided by emending to ríoghradh (IGT ii. 12) in c.

c chláir For the lenition here see Poem IV.5c n.

3 c fhudhnocht, not cited in IGT, is the form necessary for rime here; cf. DIL F, 465.71-7, U, 57.30-43.

4 b cosnamhaigh (sg. 'cosnamhach') I do not have another example of this word - a common personal name - from published Classical verse; cf. 'cosantach' IGT ii. 22, 104, Mac C M XVI. 14a, Dán na mB. M. 65.4d.

5 a pharrthais For the -rr- see IGT ii. 38.

b a n-annálaidh Though sg. I translate this as pl.

c ráith na bhFionn Na Trí Finn Eamhna, descendants of Úghoine Mór and ancestors of Conn Céadchathach, see Corp. Gen., 159; Foras Feasa ii, 184; Eriu iii (1907) 150, xvi (1957) 153 n. 5. In gen. pl. with rá(i)th, múr (q. 13c), gort (Poem IX. 6a) etc., very common as a name for Ireland. Also in other guises such as 'tulach an Trír' (q. 8c) or 'Teamhair na dtrí bhfear' (Poem VIII. 28b, cf. 'ar Thealaigh na dTrí gCuradh' Di D 97.13c). See TD i, p. lvii.

6 a Guaiseabhaic For -ss->-s- see General Introduction: Editorial Principles.

an Lia The Lia Fáil, a stone on Tara which, when stood upon by the rightful claimant to the sovereignty of Ireland, emitted a scream; cf. for example, ZCP xx (1939) 219, Foras Feasa i, 100.

b With this line cf. 'leag a hoirthior na hInnia' (Aith. D 16.47b) and particularly 'Tú bheanfas labhra as an Lia/tú an chloch uasal ón Innia' (POR XIX. 32ab, by Fearghal Óg).

c Mhoighe Rath Magh Rath, location of a famous battle in which Domnall mac Aeda defeated Congall Claen/Caech in 637; see O Donovan, The banquet of Dun na n-Gedh and the battle of Magh Rath and C. Marstrander, 'A new version of the battle of Mag Rath' in Ériu v (1911) 226-47. Commonly taken to be Moira in the baroney of Lower Iveagh, north co. Down; e.g. AFM i, 253 n.m, Onom., 528. In 1856, however, the suggestion was made that it was in fact located in what in the sixteenth century would have been Mág Aonghusa's territory, near Newry; UJA iv (1856) 53-61. The form 'moighe', a permitted variant of 'muighe' (IGT ii. 31, 176), is necessary for rime.

7 b Rudhruighe see Introduction.

c fiadh Floinn i.e. Ireland. The Flann in question is usually taken to be Flann (Sinna) mac Mael Sechnaill, king of Tara, Corp. Gen., 125; cf. IBP, 277 n.3, TD ii, 188 n. 2.

8 a airdrígh is the correct form of the dat. sg. (cf. line d), B's is gen. sg./pl. The 'breacadh' here (Trír:airdrígh/airdrígh) is as detailed in Breacadh 24 (d), 27. For that involved in Comhtha:tolcha:chomhtha see ibid., 24(a), 25(i)-(iv).

c For the complimentary term 'caor bhuaidh/bhuadha' see Di D 38.30a (Fearghal Óg) and DIL C, 19.67-70.

For 'tolach an Trír' see q. 5c n. supra.

9 a For the 'breacadh' here in sléachtuin:
éachtuigh: sléachtuin, cf. q. 8a n. supra.

c Eine Probably as in Magh Eine (see Poem IV. 63a n. and cf. TD 41. 3c) though in this case it is intended as a name for Ireland or may belong to the convention noted at Poem III. 6d.

10 c This line lacks a syllable in B. I supply an from A though another solution might be to read ba for is.

For geall: Raoileann/dhligheann see q. 4b n. supra.

11 b do chrích Ghailian This reading is problematic. The Galioin were one of the tribes closely associated with the Laighin and, wherever it occurs, 'críoch [etc.] Ghailian' always refers to the territory of Leinster and never to Ireland as a whole; cf. TD 27.3b; Aith. D 33.13b; Di. D 100.6d, 117.9d; Butlers VIII. 6d; L Branach, 421; see also EIHM, 92 ff. and Onom., 434. If the poet means 'Leinster' here, then one might expect him to continue for another quatrain, or so, with similar statements regarding Mumha, Connacht and possibly Midhe (see Poem III. 6c n.). One is equally obliged to dismiss the possibility that a Leinster origin for Clann Rudhraighe is being suggested here as only the most dubious evidence for such a connection exists (EIHM, 95).

We must therefore either assume that Fearghal Óg, exceptionally, is using 'críoch Ghailian' as a name for Ireland - perhaps on analogy with 'gort [etc.] Gaileang' (cf. TD 32. 30d, 39d, IBP 29.7d etc.)

- or else we must question the accuracy of the reading. The reading of A is 'sa ccomhfhiall' which we could emend to 'is a gcoimhfhiail' and translate 'None as good or as generous as them has ever existed ...'.

12 This quatrain anticipates qq. 53-4.

a For the type of 'breacadh' known as 'caitheamh aonfhocail', of which the phrase ceann i gceann is an instance, see Breacadh, Chap. VIII; cf. XI. 51c.

b -foghar for MSS foghthar/faghthar is a permitted variant (IGT iii. 22) and necessary for rime.

14 a I am unsure whether or not MS Do dearbhadh should be allowed stand as an impersonal form; cf. Poem XI. 39a and DER 13.19a.

For mé: uile/duine see q. 8a n.

b 'Buga', in the matter of generosity towards poets, and 'cruas' in battle are the two essential and interdependent qualities always singled out for praise by bardic poets: cf. Poem IX.36b, ISP, 23. 1 and L Branach, lines 2513-6 (all by Fearghal Óg). Qq. 14-26 here concern the generosity and toughness of Clann Rudhraighe; cf. q. 26a.

References to the extraordinary generosity of legendary personages are commonplace in Classical verse. Such allusions could serve a double purpose: they could be used to praise, by implication, the subject of the poem - as in the present instance - or

they could also be employed to support the supposed humility of the poet in lamenting the importunity and impertinence of his predecessors. (The relevant references are given in the notes following.)

Fearghal Óg is drawing on this common stock of anecdotes to illustrate the geall féile (q. 20b) which Clann Rudhraighe have won. He returns to this theme again in qq. 35-46 with three specific and related instances of Clann Rudhraighe's affection and regard for poets.

Cearc Bhoirche Little is known of the circumstances referred to here. Our knowledge of 'Cearc Bhoirche' derives mainly from onomastic material. In the dindsheanchas of Ard Fothaid (co. Donegal) it is said that Fothad Airgthech slept for six weeks at the sound of this bird.¹ In the dindsheanchas of Loch Dergdeirc² (Loch Derg) we learn that Feirceirtne mac Athgló 'prímfhili Ulad' requested the eye of Eochaid mac Luchta 'in payment for Boirche's hen which the poets had brought from the west'.³ (This is a variant of the Athairne anecdote referred to below, q. 17.)

A genealogy in TCD MS H. 3. 17 states that Boirche 'ó n-abar cerc Boirche' was son of Aed mac Dubthaig, a descendant of Rudhraighe,⁴ and the dindsheanchas of Benn Boirche - in Máig Aonghusa's territory, cf. q. 57a infra and Poem IV. 61a n. - tells us that this Boirche was a famous herdsman.⁵

From the references in the present poem and in Di. D 121.29a and IBP 14.3 we can conclude that a

1 Metr. Dind. iv, 90 (verse); RC xvi (1895) 39-40 (prose).

2 Metr. Dind. iii, 338-47; RC xv (1894) 461-3.

3 Only in prose version.

4 Cited Metr. Dind. iv, 398.

5 Ibid., 144.

gift was made of this bird to a poet or poets. The donor may have been Boirche himself but this is guesswork.

c bhfear I may be mistaken in showing eclipsis here. IGT ii. 20 suggests that lenition follows uile in all cases except gen. pl., though acc. sg. is not included there. I have not yet found any decisive example of this usage; cf. DIL U, 62.28-34.

15 a The reference here would appear to be to Cú Chulainn: cf. q. 16. This is also supported by Fearghal Óg's reference to 'Sleagh na Con' in Di. D 121.29a. The allusion is possibly to an incident recounted in Aidedh Con Culainn where his spear is requested of Cú Chulainn by twenty-eight poets from the opposing side as a means of halting his advance. See Van Hamel, Compert Con Culainn and other stories, 99.31.

cd In the case of tharuidh and cor the manuscript readings have been emended to permitted variants for perfect rime; cf. IGT ii.53 and iii.58 respectively.

16 This seems to refer to the beheading incident in Fled Bricrend - cf. IBP 14.5 - see ed. Henderson, 116-29. The beheader is Cú Roí mac Dáire, Cú Chulainn's arch-rival and, if my interpretation be correct, it is not clear why he should be referred to as the 'mac ochta' - cf. DIL U, 50.32-51 - of the Ulster warriors, a term which would be far better suited to Cú Chulainn himself. Cú Roí was of the Ulaid but this is not emphasised in the Ulster-cycle;

cf. Corp. Gen., 154 and EIHM, 175 n. 2, 180 n. 3.

17 The incident referred to here was very popular with the poets as an illustration of the ultimate in generosity: see references and commentary in Apalóga, 61-2. Despite variant versions in Foras Feasa iii, 58 and in the dindsheanchas of Loch Dergdeirc (see q. 14b n. supra), where the poets are named Labhán and Feirceirtne mac Athgló (cf. Aithirne (mac Fachtna) mac Athló, Corp. Gen., 274) respectively, the best-known account, and that favoured by the poets, is that in the LL tale 'Talland Étair',¹ where the poet is the infamous Aithirne Áilgheasach. Aithirne requested, as a gift, his only eye of Eochaidh mac Luchta, who, rather than refuse a poet, tore it from his head and gave it to him.

This Eochaidh, or Eochu, is a shadowy figure who, in 'Talland Étair' is said to be the king of the south of Connacht but who is otherwise noted as a king of different regions in Munster.² His genealogical affiliations are with the Corcu Loígde, being descended from Lugaid mac Ítha,³ and it is therefore not immediately clear how Fearghal Óg can claim him for Síol Ír. However, in the genealogies in Rawl. B 502, it is stated that the Corcu Loígde were descended from Lugaid Leog, a great-grandson of Conall Cearnach,⁴ and it may be this tradition which is being invoked here.

18 Cuanu mac Cailchín(i), also known as

1 RC viii (1887) 47-64.

2 See EIHM, 59 n. 2, 177 n. 3.

3 Corp. Gen., 332-3.

4 Ibid., 155.

Laech Liathmuine, was a seventh century king of Fir Maige Féne the tale of whose death is coupled with the story of Mór Mumhan in a text extant in LL and in the Book of Fermoy.⁵ He was regarded as the uterine brother of Guaire Aidne⁶ (cf. q. 19d) and rivalled him in generosity for which he was renowned.⁷ In a poem, of which he is the supposed speaker, he says:

In one day, three hundred poems have been
brought to me for reward; my Lord came to my
aid (and) I got⁸ an ingot of gold (to give)
for every poem.

A digression in Betha Molaga tells how three druids and their retinue, deliberately sent by Guaire, were granted their request to plunder the town of Carn Cuillinn by Cuanu rather than refuse them.⁹ Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin refers to Cuanu's generosity - and also to Guaire and Eochaidh mac Luchta - in a poem to Donnchadh Ó Ceallacháin c. 1640:

Cuana mac Cailchinn [sic] chaithmhigh
fuair, lear dháil do dhearlaighthibh,
a bheith a los céime ós cách -
a fhéile ad-chlos ina conách.¹⁰

Genealogically Cuanu was of Síol Ír as the Uí Chuscraid of Fir Maige Féne were descendants of Mug-Ruith mac Feargusa.¹¹

5 Ed. T.P. O'Nolan in PRIA 30 C 9 (1912) 261-82.

6 S. Ó Coileáin, 'The structure of a literary cycle' in Ériu xxv (1974) (88-125) 92-3, 116.

7 Foras Feasa iii, 130; M. O Daly, 'Mesce Chúanach' in Ériu xix (1962) 75-80; Ó Coileáin, art. cit., 120-23.

8 O Daly, art. cit., 77/78.3.

9 Cit. Ó Coileáin, art. cit., 122.

10 SGS xiii (1981) 293.7.

11 Ó Coileáin, art. cit., 120-21; Corp. Gen., 279.

b For the 'breacadh' in Cuanna: Chuanna: chuala see q. 8a n. supra.

19 a For Aodh Mág Aonghusa's nickname, (An) Fear Dorcha, see Introduction.

b cláir na gcuradh a kenning for 'Ireland'; cf. DMU I. 7b, POR XXXIII. 9a.

d Guaire Legendary seventh century king of Connacht, renowned for his hospitality and generosity; see q. 18 n. and Ó Coileáin, art. cit.; cf. q. 67d infra and Poem II. 26b n.

20 ab When geall is used in the sense of 'supremacy', the verb most commonly used with it is beiridh; cf. Feil. Mhic Néill, 66.

Qq. 14-19 have been concerned with the 'geall féile' of Clann Rudhraighe, qq. 21-7 deal with their 'geall gaisgidh' in what amounts to a caithréim of their victories. For the general indebtedness of these quatrains to 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach' see Introduction.

c Bheannchuir, nom. Beannchar (Engl. Bangor, bar. Ards Lower and Lower Castlereagh, north co. Down) or the southern side of the mouth of Belfast Lough. Site of an important early-Christian settlement from the sixth century and of an Augustinian abbey from the twelfth to the sixteenth.

d The word bua(i)dh has many shades of meaning, ranging from 'victory', 'supremacy', 'advantage, benefit' to 'gift' or 'attribute'. This

same range of meanings is also found in phrases which combine bua(i)dh with the prep. ar where the latter denotes the person or thing with whom the advantage lies. Instances of this are numerous: e.g. Poems VIII. 16d, IX. 44a; Di. D 74.28c; Aith. D 58.9ab; DMU IX. 1a; L Branach, 352.1187 n.; Falconer, Lorgaireacht, line 1356; DIL B, 224.4, 10, 15-16.

21 As noted in the Introduction, the section beginning here amounts to a 'caithréim' of Clann Rudhraighe, taking its general inspiration from qq. 1-15 of 'Lámh dhearg Éireann Íbh Eathach', a point underlined by the allusion to the 'éarca' theme in q. 22d. The purpose of the list of victories in this poem, however, is not to illustrate the martial supremacy (geall gaisgidh q. 20b) of Clann Rudhraighe over Ireland alone, but to show how they conquered all of Europe (cf. q. 26) as well. Thus both the king of Ireland and the king of the world were defeated by them (q. 22) and their territorial domination extended from east to west (qq. 23-4) and from north to south (q. 25).

The list of victories in 'Lámh dhearg' is of some assistance in identifying the events located in Ireland but, naturally, of no help at all in locating those outside of Ireland. ('Ar sliocht trír' is not much better, its relevance in this context being limited to q. 25a, q.v.) Another problem in attempting to identify the European allusions is that one does not know to what particular stratum of tradition these references belong. It could be that in some cases (in particular the Muir dToirrian reference in q. 24a) the references are to incidents immediately preceding the Milesian invasion as told in Leabhar Gabhála. It may also be that developments of

'the viking theme' in eleventh and twelfth century material belonging to the Ulster cycle is being referred to (see Mac Cana in Ó Cuív, The impact of the Scandinavian invasions, 80-85) or that we have to do with later, romance material of the type found in Ulster manuscripts of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (e.g., cf. O Rahilly, The pursuit of Gruaidh Ghriansholus; Ní Mhuirgheasa and Ó Ceithearnaigh, Sgéalta rómánsuíochta; Ní Chléirigh, Eachtra na gcuradh).

It could also be that no particular incidents are being alluded to and that Lochlainn and Muir dToirrian are introduced merely to construct the east-west, north-south lines of conquest noted above. However, I think that this is unlikely.

b This is doubtless a reference to Cú Chulainn.

22 a For the phrase ceann i gceann see q. 12a n. and for ó mhuir go muir in line c see Breacadh 16.

b This probably refers to Conn Céadchathach (cf. 'Ar sliocht trír' q. 17b). Though accounts of his death are fragmentary and, at times, contradictory, all agree in having the Ulaidh, in the person of Tíbraide Tíreach, as the chief agents of his death. An account of these traditions is given in Éigse xxi (1986) 53-65.

c I do not know what incident is referred to here (note that MS A reads is fir domhain). The Ulaidh play a small but significant part in Cath Finntrágha (e.g. ed. O Rahilly, lines 1028-40) in

which Rí an Domhain, Dáire Donn, is eventually slain. Note also that Cú Ruí, who was slain by Cú Chulainn (see q. 25c n.), is referred to in Mesca Uladh, lines 452-3, as 'Rí an domhain'; cf. EIHM, 210 n. 2.

d A reference to the 'éarca' theme: see Introduction.

23 a This could be construed as a proleptic reference to Muir dToirrian of q. 24a.

cd The reference to 'buaigh chaluidh Chorcuighe' is obscure to me. Carn Balair is presumably Carn Í Néid (Mizen Head, co. Cork); ~~though I/ have not seen it referred to as such anywhere else;~~ cf. Butlers, p. 136, line 1696 n. In the Early Modern Irish version of Cath Muighe Tuireadh Lugh finally catches up with Balar ua Néid at 'Carn Eóluirg risa ráitear Carn Í Neid' (ed. Ó Cuív, line 1293w) and slays him there. As Lugh is reputed to have been Cú Chulainn's father (see references in CMT, 127) could the poet be thinking of this here and including the slaying of Balor among victories of Clann Rudhraighe because of this association?

5, line 1317n, |

24 a See q. 21 n. In Cath Ruis na Ríg, a text possibly alluded to in lines b and c here, Conall Cearnach is depicted as 'ac tastel mara Ict agus mara Torrian' (ed. Hogan, p. 10). The eclipse of Toirrian is a calcified relic of an old neuter declension of muir.

bc This is possibly an allusion to Cath Ruis na Ríg in which the Ulaidh defeated the Laighin under

Cairpre Nia Fer; this battle is mentioned in q. 7d of 'Lámh dhearg' and q. 15a of 'Ar sliocht trír'. The Boyne was also where Conchubhar defeated Eochaid Feidleach, king of Ireland; see Ériu ii (1905) 173-85.

d The placename Iorrus occurs in a number of locations on the west coast from Mayo to Kerry (Onom., 472). Given the east-west direction of the references in this quatrain (see q. 21 n.) Iorrus here is probably Erris in co. Mayo, with Rinn Iorruis possibly signifying Erris Head, the most westerly mainland point in that area. As this is not otherwise attested perhaps we should read simply rinn Iorruis 'the tip of Erris'?

The reference is to the events surrounding 'Táin bó Flidais', where Meadhbh and Ailill, through the agency of the Ulsterman, Fergus mac Róigh, succeed in defeating Ailill Fionn and the Gamhanradh of Iorrus with Fergus taking Ailill Fionn's wife, Flidais. See IT ii/2 (1887) 206-23; Celtic Review i (1905) 296- iv (1908) 218; Ériu viii (1915-16) 133-49; RSAL Jn. xci (1961) 117-27, 219-28, xcii (1962) 19-39; cf. 'Lámh dhearg' q. 13ab:

D'éachtaibh Uladh na nairm dtais
Oilill Fionn is fian Iorruis.

25 a This may possibly be an allusion to some early instances in Irish tradition of journeys to Lochlainn found in the Ulster cycle (see q. 21 n.) but it is more likely a reference to Conghal Cláiringhneach's escapades in Lochlainn as told in Caithréim Conghail Cláiringhnigh (ed. MacSweeney) 102-50; this is mentioned in 'Ar sliocht trír' q. 13.

c This may refer to the accidental expedition - or baoithréim - of the Ulaidh to Teamhair Luachra, Cú Ruí's fortress in Luachair Deadhaidh in west Munster as told in Mesca Uladh; see ed. Watson and Ériu xxxvii (1986) 158-74. This is mentioned in both 'Lámh dhearg' and 'Ar sliocht trír': see Introduction n. 66.

It might also refer to the destruction of Cathair Chon Ruí (in an unspecified location but presumably in west Munster) when Cú Chulainn slew Cú Ruí; see Ériu ii (1905) 18-35. Ó Concheanainn mistook the allusion to Cathair Chon Raoi in 'Ar sliocht trír' q. 14b as a reference to Mesca Uladh.

26 c Sídh Lir: cf. TD 11.18b, L Branach, line 2602. This does not seem to be a name for Ireland - but cf. 'múr Lir', Aith. D 38.27b - but rather the location of Lear's sídh either in The Fews (south Armagh) or in Beann Boirche: see Onom., 559 s. v. 's. findachaid'.

d Eóraip is cited from one manuscript in IGT ii. 13 where its gen. sg. would be *Eóraipe. But Eórpa is the normal form in Classical verse. e.g. L Branach, line 492, TD 13.52d, Aith. D 17.47c, DMU II. 42a etc. For earlier Eóropa see DIL E, 154.35-6.

27 c B's reading is obviously corrupt here.
For feadh:dáileadh/d'áireamh see q. 8a n.

28 d Liathdroma, nom. Liathdruim. Another name for Teamhair - see Onom., 488 - and thus

'gort/clár etc. L.' is a name for Ireland; cf. Top. poems, line 1122, DMU XXII. 34b and TD i, p. lviii.

29 a For geall:geall:bheann see q. 8a n. supra.

b ó's dá chomaidheamh This and a similar phrase at Poem VIII. 46c appear to be no more than chevilles. 'Comh-' acts as an intensifier in this compound.

d Bóruimhe in co. Clare associated with the great king Brian Bóruimhe. Common in Classical verse as a complimentary epithet - eg. TD ii, 341, POR XXXVII. 28b etc. - where such usage is probably an example of that noted at Poem III. 6d n. The reference here, of course, is to Aodh Mág Aonghusa.

30 a Rosa, nom. Ros(s), son of Rudhraighe (q. 7b n.) - see Corp. Gen., 271 - thus 'fréamh Rosa' is a synonym for 'fréamh Rudhraighe'.

31 Two varieties of 'breacadh' in this quatrain: for neach:cleath:neach see q. 8a n. supra; for mhó:chró:chló:aonló, see Breacadh 29 (vi).

32 b tug For the editorial omission of eclipsis here see Poem IV. 5a n.

Móid, in the sense given here, is well attested: cf. Magauran XXIII. 5a, Di. D 67. 4a, DIL M, 160, 72-84. This line anticipates qq. 35-45 infra, but fiormhóid may also contain a personal reference to

Fearghal Óg's relationship with Mág Aonghusa; cf. Poem VI.

33 b A pun may be intended as glún might also mean 'generation' here.

34 cd My interpretation of these two lines is uncertain. Throughout the poem it would appear that a case is being made for the descendants of Míl - the Gaoidhil - as opposed to non-Gaoidhil: the 'Éirionnaigh'. The supremacy of Clann Ír over the rest of Ireland is always emphasised: cf. qq. 20d, 21d, 31b, 43b, 44b, 48b and 49d. The present reading seems preferable to alternatives such as 'éineach' (cf. v. 1.) or 'báidh' = 'affection' or taking 'eineach' as the subject to do-chuaidh. Yet it seems at variance with the usage as noted above. Perhaps, however, the distinction between Gaoidhil and Éirionnaigh is more apparent than real and, in the present instance at least, the two are to be regarded as synonyms.

For fiodh: Gaoidheal/ aoinfhear see q. 8a n.

35 b I have emended the manuscript readings to show plural verb here in order to preserve concord between verb and subject and so avoid the fault termed 'uathadh re hilar', IGT v. 20.

d The form déineamh is necessary here for perfect rime and is a permitted variant of the manuscript reading, 'déanamh', IGT ii.101, iii.1.

In the light of the subsequent quatrains, I prefer A's reading, an athuair, to that of B.

The subject of the uirsgéal which follows in the next seven quatrains was very popular with the poets of this period. It was the single piece of seanchas which best epitomised the generosity and hospitality which poets perceived as being their due and the fact that it was associated with Clann Rudhraighe meant that its selection for inclusion in the present poem was automatic.

I am aware of nine other references in the poetry of this period to the retention of the poets by Clann Rudhraighe. Five of these are listed by Ó Caithnia¹, though his treatment and discussion of them leave much to be desired. The other four are in poems by Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird², Fearghal Óg³, Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha⁴ and Aindrias Mac an Bheatha⁵. The earliest of these poems dates from the early fourteenth century⁶ and the rest belong to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries.

In four of these poems the reference amounts to no more than an allusion and does not extend beyond one quatrain; in the remaining five which expand to some extent on the reference, attention is confined to the first of the three episodes: the retention of the poets by Cú Chulainn and Conchubhar (qq. 36-8 *infra*). This means that Fearghal Óg's treatment of the subject is the fullest and most detailed which, to date, has been found in Classical verse. I would cite this observation in support of my contention that Fearghal Óg is here attempting a poem on Clann Rudhraighe to surpass all other efforts (see Introduction).

1 Apalóga, 71-2 (RIOo - RIOs).

2 Celtica xii (1977) 132.11.

3 Ibid. xvi (1984) 76.11.

4 RIA MS E iv 3, p. 49. [q. 6] .

5 Ibid., p. 37. [qq. 4-7].

6 B. Ó Cuív, 'An appeal on behalf of the profession of poetry' in Eigse xiv (1971-2) 87-106.

The source for what follows is to be found in a poem beginning 'Eamhain Uladh ionmhain leam' which, with a prose introduction, occurs in the version of the preface to 'Amra Choluimb Chille' in Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 502.⁷ It there constitutes a digression on the banishment of the poets which was one of the three reasons for which the Convention of Druim Celt was convened.⁸ (This was also the source used by Keating for his account.⁹) I will quote from this text in my notes on the following quatrains.

The retention of the poets, then, was a matter of great honour to Clann Rudhraighe and this was recognized by Fearghal Óg in 'Ar slíocht trí atáid Gaoidhil' (loc. cit.):

Níorbh iongnadh tús do dhul dáibh,
leo do fosdadh - fáth iomráidh,
sgéal nuaidhe nach ní folaigh -
trí huaire na hollamhain.

and by Aindrias Mac an Bheatha (loc. cit., q. 7):

Ó éigsibh dá bhithin sin
tar fhéinibh innse Gaoidhil
do fhuairsíod a ccéim nach cruaidh
tós ealadhna go nglanbhuaidh.

Hence the special treatment which it receives in the present poem where it is given a special place above the instances of generosity noted in qq. 14-18.

7 Ed. W. Stokes, *RC* xx (1899) 42-4; cf. *Br. Mus. Catg.* ii, 265.

8 But see Bannerman, *Studies in the history of Dalriada*, 160. For discussion see P. Mac Cana 'Regnum and Sacerdotium: notes on Irish tradition' in *PBA* lxx (1979) (443-79) 462-7.

9 *Foras Feasa* iii, 78-80.

36 a Oighre Subhaltuigh i.e. Cú Chulainn. Subhaltach - OIr. Sualtaim/ Sualtach: cf. TBC LL, lines 442-3, etc. - was Cú Chulainn's father.

The source (see above) relates how Cú Chulainn gave a month's billeting to the twelve hundred poets before Conchubhar took them over and maintained them for seven years (cf. qq. 37-8):

Fo thrí immorro ro diulsat fir Herenn fria filedu
co ros-fostat Ulaid ara feili. Da cet ar mili a
lín isin cetnafhocru, co ros-fost Conchobhar co
maithib Ulad secht mbliadna

Da cet ar mili don maig
do druthaib, do fhiledaib
dollotar huile moale
co menmat min Muirthemne.

Mochen do drung dil duanach
ar Cúchulainn chathbuadach
coindmed mís m'oenur, sid seng,
uaim doib ria nUltaib Herenn.

Heirgit Ulaid, amra in sluag,
im Chonchobhar claidebruad:
connmed secht mbliadan co mbliad
uainne dona filedaib.

b Lenition on fhóid is an instance of
'slégar'.

37 b filidh is nom. pl. for acc. pl.
fileadha (IGT ii.21); cf. Éigse iii (1941) 61 (d).

c Íle, Islay, cf. Aith. D. 15.23d;

complimentary usage as at q. 47d infra: cf. Poem III. 6d n.

38 b deaghmhac Fhachtna Fháthaigh i.e. Conchubhar. Fachtna, who held the kingship of Ireland for sixteen years, was son or grandson of Rudhraighe: Corp. Gen., 120.

39 The Rawl. B 502 Preface continues:

In fuacra tanise immorro dia ro dlomad fri
Eochaid rigece a secht cetaib, diar'fost
Fiachna mac Baotan bliadain

Eochu rígecess, recht ran
luid co Fiachna mac mBaetán
forfrith failte dimor de
na filid ro fossaigthe.

d MS (B) iadh is not listed as a variant of either iath or fiadh in IGT ii. 95; for emendation to fiadh see L Branach, 341, line 128 n.

40 a For other traditions regarding Fiach(n)a - a rather shadowy royal figure of the Ulaidh - see SG i, 390-94; Ériu v (1911) 113-9; Foras Feasa iii, 74-6, 110-112; EIHM, 345-6.

41 The source reads:

In tres fhecht immorro aurfhocra in da cet dec

filed im Eochaid rígeces, im Dallan, im Senchan,
 dia ros-fost Mael Coba ri Ulad teora bliadna

Fecht do Mael Choba na cliar
 hic Ibur Cind Trachta thiar
 da cet déc filed fofuair
 riasin n-Ibar aniartuaid.

Do rat doib Mael Coba in cing
 coinmed teora mbliadan mbind
 meraid co lá bratha bain
 do cheneúil delbda Demmain.

(These two quatrains also appear in the version of the Preface to the 'Amra' in LU and TCD MS 1441: see LU, lines 342-9; Stokes, Goidelica, 156; Bernard and Atkinson, The Irish Liber Hymnorum i, 164.)

c A reference to the notorious oppressiveness of the poets; e.g., cf. RC xx (1899) 421-3.

42 a Maol Cobha mac Fiachnae meic Demmáin; a king of the Ulaidh who died in 646 according to the Four Masters, AFM i, 262. He was of the Dál bhFiatach; see Corp. Gen., 409-10. The reference to him as an 'airdrí', in line b, may suggest confusion with Maol Cobha mac Áeda meic Ainmerech; Corp. Gen., 125 etc. (cf. Ériu xxi (1969) 103).

cd shéad: chéad: déag would seem to be an instance of the metrical fault known as 'rudhrach' (see IGT v. 10; BST, 221.25-35; Graiméir, lines 2855-9) to which none of the solutions discussed in

Breacadh chap. XI is applicable.

It could be argued that ollamh is gen. pl. here following céad (Thurn. Gramm., 244-5) and that eclipsis should therefore be shown on the following adjective. But the evidence of bliadhain suggests that, at this period at least, nom. sg. could also be used; cf. q. 49a infra, and Poem IX. 58a; also DIL C, 152.8-10. Note the variation in a single poem by Tadhg Dall: TD 32.37d, 39c, 44a, 49a, 54b, 56a.

43 b Lenition^{on}_k fhear here is an instance of 'sléagar'.

c For leath ar leath see Breacadh chap. VII; note also sin: einigh/deighfhir, cf. q. 8a n.

44 c do fhéag, a permitted variant of MS do fhéagh (IGT iii. 93), is required for perfect rime.

46 d Yet another example here of the feature noted at Poem III. 6d n. Just as Domhnall Mac Suibhne Fánad can be said to be 'ó Dhún Dealgan', Aodh Mág Aonghusa can be 'ó Thuathaibh Toruidhe'. For the Tuatha see Poem II, Introduction.

47 a For the method of argument here cf. Poem II. 17a n.

d Íle cf. q. 37c n. supra.

48 d The context would appear to support A's

reading rather than that of B here. For the use of gairm in terminology associated with the inauguration of chieftains see Simms, From kings to warlords, 32-3.

49 a For the calculation of nine hundred years see the Introduction.

The type of 'breacadh' involved in deóigh i ndeóigh (cf. diaidh i ndiaidh q. 50c infra) is dealt with in Breacadh, 16-18, while that in fhionn/ chionn: ngéireann/ Éireann is referred to at q. 8a n. supra.

50 In this quatrain, and in the three following, the traditional notion that the true king should unite the whole country (see Poem II. 12d n.) is nicely inverted as the poet argues that it is the disunity of the country which prevents Aodh from being recognised as the true king.

b do bhiath For this form of the past subj. see IGT iii. 7, especially ex. 97 where the form is fixed by rime although the manuscripts read -dh.

c diaidh i ndiaidh See q. 49a n. supra.

52 a dhóirtsíod This verb may have either a short or a long vowel in its stem; cf. IGT iii.71.

b do bhiadh Secondary future used here for imperfect.

53 c Aodh Eanghach also '(an t-)Aodh Iodhan' (cf. q. 55c and Poem XII. 50c) appears only sketchily

in early tradition¹ but from the thirteenth century on features in Classical Verse as the archetypal Prophetised One.² The prophecies mentioning him are usually ascribed to a number of saints (q. 12b), principally Sts Colum Cille and Bearchán,³ though in q. 54d 'naomh Teamhrach' may mean St Patrick who is also mentioned in connection with the prophecy.⁴ For a possible connection between these quatrains and 'Lámh dhearg Éirionn Íbh Eathach' see Introduction.

d claoínTeamhrach One wonders whether the common compounding of 'claoín' with 'Teamhair' - e.g. Celtica xvi (1984) 77.17b, Aith. D 30.37b, Di. D 121.32b ('claoínTé') - is not in fact an allusion to that feature known as the claoínfhearta; cf. Celtica xi (1976) 173 n.

54 a Bráighe gill As the context suggests, this signifies an object of great price. It is commonly used by poets in referring to chieftains; e.g. Di. D 79.29b, 77.13c, Aith. D ii, 232.13c n. In a poem praying for the recovery of Pilib Ó Raghallaigh (ob. 1596) it refers to the head of Meas Geaghra as it is carried to Ulster by Ceat mac Mághach: POR IX.11.

Absence of lenition on gill, here, is an instance of 'sléagar'.

b For Aodh: Aodh: naomh see q. 8a n. supra.

1 ZCP xii (1918) 237; B N nÉ ii, 363.54 n.; Corp. Gen., 439.

2 For examples and commentary see DF iii, 115.44b n.; Carney in Dillon (ed.) Irish Sagas, 159-62; Ó Buachalla in de Brún et. al. (eds), Folia Gadelica, 75-6; Simms, From kings to warlords, 15, 26-7.

3 O'Kearney, The prophecies of SS. Columbkille, 46, 128; ZCP xviii (1930) 29-30.

4 E.g. POR V. 20; cf. Magauran XXI. 16-27.

55 a Íbh Eathach Mág Aonghusa's territory in county Down. Sometimes 'Íbh Eathach Cobha' (cf. Onom., 669). See Introduction, passim, especially n. 8.

d The rimes Aodh: Aodh: aon in this leathrann represent a type of 'breacadh' discussed in Breacadh ch. VI.

This quatrain introduces the theme of the prosperity and fruitfulness of the land betokening the rule of the rightful king. This was inherited from the earlier literature (see McCone, 'Fírinne agus torthúlacht' in Leachtaí Cholm Cille xi (1980) 136-73) and is commonplace in Classical Verse; good examples are DMU VII. 23-28, and ISP, 70-71. The obverse of this idea is found in elegiac compositions where the absence of the rightful king, due to his death, is mirrored in the desolation and poverty of the land; see Poem XI.

56 a For lán: lán see, perhaps, Breacadh, 64.

c Dún Droma Probably Dundrum town, par. Kilmeegan, bar. Lecale Upper, co. Down.

58 a For the practice of grouping sounds in triads see MD i, 86.

b fírbheach The first element of this compound is difficult to translate and may possibly be of alliterative value only; cf. DIL F, 148.80-82; Celtica xiii (1980) 118.

59 a Chabha Usually 'Cobha' (: 'bhrogha' Poem XI.37cd; : 'dhola' POR XXXVI.9cd); see q. 55a n. and Onom., 279.

c Reading taisdil as a compound adjective makes better sense to me than taking it as taisdi(o)l 'travelling, visiting'. In either case lenition of muighe is an example of 'sléagar'.

An Chaoil see Poem IV.69b n.

60 a A mythological reference anticipating q. 65, q. v.

c Such are the ideal climatic conditions obtaining during the rule of Mág Aonghusa - showers of honey and no wind - that what would normally be considered harmful and oppressive is rendered harmless, indeed pleasant. The reference to 'teagh gan tuighe' derives from the catalogue of hardships frequently invoked in Classical Verse to illustrate a subject's prowess on campaign and/or the difficulties experienced while striving for the rule of his territory; see Poem XII. 10n. and especially VIII. 12c n.

d Fearnmhuighe (nom. Fearnmhagh) Mac Mathghamhna's territory of Farney, co. Monaghan. Not to be taken as suggesting the influence of Mág Aonghusa in that area but rather as an instance of the stylistic device noted Poem III. 6d n.

61 a The meaning of this line is clarified in the next quatrain.

c This line wants a syllable in B and both rime and alliteration show that what is missing is the first element of a compound with ghil. A's reading, though faulty in the matter of alliteration, gives a clue as to the possible original reading. For this reason I have emended the text to bhaillghil although the only other example I have of ball used with reference to a river is 'flaith ballDaile' Di. D 83.11b. (Cf. DIL B, 25.67-8.) Were it not for A's reading with -ll- (admittedly influenced by 'mall'), I would have preferred to read bhailbhghil 'bright and silent'; cf. 'ó Éirne ... bhalbhghloin' Di. D 70.9b, 'ón Bhóinn bhailbhrighin' Aith. D 34.14c.

The use of 'Baoill' here is as noted for 'Fearnmhagh' in the preceding quatrain.

d Or perhaps 'who does not begrudge anybody's supplication'.

62 For the seventy-eight kings mentioned here see Introduction.

63 a For mé: uile/ mhuighe see q. 8a n. supra.

c We might expect n-uile here; perhaps uile has an adverbial rather than an adjectival force.

65 a Niall Frasach mac Fearghail meic Mhaoile Dúin, an eighth-century king of Ireland of the line of Conn Céadchathach; Corp. Gen., 125, 134. For the three showers (honey, silver, blood/wheat) that fell at the beginning of his reign see EIHM, 259 n. 1;

Foras Feasa iii, 144, 150. Cf. q. 60a supra.

c A's reading seems the more likely here. reic has to be the vb noun as the finite forms have the stem reac- (IGT iii. 81). For reacaidh with the sense 'prophecies' cf. 'Tú do reac Rúadhán Lothra/ do theacht (is cúis chabhartha)', POR V.25ab.

d In the first leathrann Mág Aonghusa is referred to in the third person. In the second leathrann he is addressed directly. In IGT v. 23 this alteration from third to second person within a quatrain is termed 'Agallamh is faisnéis' and regarded as a fault. In BST 224.18-31, 14a.34-44, 45a.2-14, the same feature is juxtaposed with a similar one termed 'Fógra faisnéise'. It is not stated that either was regarded as a fault and, in fact, the examples in section 14a are followed by the word cóir. The distinction between them, as noted by McKenna, BST p. 174, is that 'Fógra Faisnéise' is a change from second person to third person and 'Agallamh is faisnéis' a change from third to second.

66 b Murchadh was Brian's eldest son and died at Clontarf before he could succeed his father. (He was therefore never an 'airdrí' (cf. q. 64b).) See Todd, Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh, passim; cf. Poem IX.4.

Bóroimhe as opposed to Bóramha (B) is necessary for rime; see Poem XI.34d n.

c Conaire Either Conaire Már mac Edairsgéala (Corp. Gen., 120) or Conaire mac Mogha Lámha (ibid., 129); see EIHM, 202, where they are regarded as ultimately one person.

67 The closing section of this poem is comparable to that of Fearghal Óg's address to Pilib Ó Raghallaigh, POR XIX.27-39.

a The verb lingidh used in the sense of 'overcomes' is well attested (e.g. Di. D 98.36b; POR VI.9a; DMU XIII.9a; Poem VIII.43a; DIL L, 161.4-5). The usage may be associated with the ability to jump great heights which is a common attribute of the superlative hero in Irish tradition (see Appendix IIIA). In this respect it may be of relevance, in the present context, that such a power was attributed to Diarmuid Ó Duibhne; see Ní Shéaghdha, Toruígheacht, lines 445-55.

c a thráigh thoraidh The reference is to the produce of the sea cast up on the shore; cf. SVBDL XXVIII. 16d and n. *ibid.*, 301; IBP 5.7c; Poem VII. 3c, 25c n.

d Guaire See q. 19d n. *supra*.

68 ab Mág Aonghusa is here likened to three well-known heroes of the Ulster Cycle: Naoisi son of Uisliu/ Uisneach and protagonist in the famous tale 'Loinges mac nUisneach'; Conall Cearnach, in O Rahilly's words 'the most famous Ulidian hero after Cúchulainn' (EIHM, 349-50); and Fearghus mac Róich.

d Laoghaire Probably Laoghaire mac Néill Naoighiallaigh who ruled Ireland for thirty years; Corp. Gen., 124.

69 a Osgair Son of Oisín son of Fionn mac

Cumhaill.

b Eachtair See Poem VIII. 18d n. DF XX describes how Osgar came to possess Eachtair's sword.

Iollánuigh Lugh Lámfhada was known as the 'Ioldánach': see, for example, TD ii, 199.10 n.

c Dhá Thí See Poem II. 10d n.

d The commonplace idea that a chieftain gained by his liberality is neatly encapsulated in this line.

70 a Or perhaps 'the only oath for Ulstermen' with a possible veiled reference to the 'Lámh Dhearg'.

b dheaghchroidhe B reads 'dheaghchroid' with ð over the final 'd'. Perhaps we should therefore read 'dheaghchroidhigh'? (A reads 'dheaghchroidhe'.)

c The form bheannchuirr is fixed by rime and therefore must be a compound of beann and corr rather than g. sg. of 'Beannchor' which invariably ends in a single -r (cf. qq. 20c, 48c supra; POR V. 23b; TD 7.21c, etc.).

71 c bhláth nom. for voc. see Poem IV. 61a n. and cf. qq. 73b, 74a infra.

mbeann would be expected here after gen. pl. See Poem II. 10b n.

72 ab A metaphorical expression of the

'cruas/buga' opposition common in Classical Verse; similarly q. 73bd. Cf. q. 14b n.

c For 'dáil sleagh' cf. O Hara XVI. 21d. The phrase might also be translated 'at meeting of spears', a possible kenning for battle.

For thráigh: dáil: thráigh see q. 8a n. *supra*.

d Tráigh na dTréinfhear In co. Antrim according to Onom., 644.

73 d Cf. 'a éan coluim ar cheannsa/féagh oruinn san éigean-sa', Dán Dé I. 19cd.

74 cd fhéile:fhéile An apparent instance of 'caoiche', see IGT v. 8, 108-116.

75 a Eilísi Presumably wife of Domhnall Óg but otherwise unidentified. See Poem VI. 18d n.

b For non-eclipsis of a vowel-initial word after gen. pl. $\text{pl.}^{\text{in}}_{\text{h}}$ -n cf. TD ii, 203.45 n.

76 cd Or, perhaps, 'may your grace grow over my every sin ...'. For eclipsis of olc see q. 14c n. *supra*.

77 This final quatrain is dedicated to Conn Ó Ruairc.

b Aolmhuighe Aolmhagh is in Ó Ruairc's territory of Bréifne, in co. Leitrim (cf. Poem XI.47d); see Onom., 20 and TD ii, 253.16 n.

For ríogh:fhíon:-íor see Poem X.4a n.

The following stanza follows the copy of the poem in G 127, p. 236:

Rígh úasal do bhéir buaidhe gach éntire
sdo bhéir dúais go buan do mórdhraoithibh
tí lúaim gan a bheith úaim acht émhíle
as giorra úaim naoí núaire Mac Áonghusa.